

Wicklow Port Access Road Link

Part 8 Application

Supporting Planning Report

Wicklow County Council

Project number: 60647343
60647343-ZZ-RP-ACM-PL-0001-P01 Supporting Planning Report

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Quality information

Prepared by



Stephen Hughes
 Consultant Planner

Checked by



Niamh Sheehy
 Senior Planner

Verified by



Andrew Gibson
 Associate Director -
 Planning

Approved by



Niamh Rodgers
 Regional Director

Revision History

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Distribution List

# Hard Copies	PDF Required	Association / Company Name

Prepared for:

Wicklow County Council
County Buildings
Whitegates
Wicklow Town
Wicklow
A67 FW96

Prepared by:

AECOM Ireland Limited
4th Floor
Adelphi Plaza
Georges Street Upper
Dun Laoghaire
Co. Dublin A96 T927
Ireland

T: +353 1 238 3100
aecom.com

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1. Introduction

This supporting Planning Report has been prepared by AECOM on behalf of the Active Travel Department of Wicklow County Council (WCC) (herein referred to as the 'Applicant') to accompany an application for planning permission, under Part 8 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 – 2024. Permission is sought from WCC for the development of the Wicklow Port Access Road Link (herein referred to as the 'Proposed Development'), in the townlands of Bollarney North, Co. Wicklow (herein referred to as 'the subject site').

This document should be read in conjunction with the plans and particulars submitted as part of the planning application package. This Report assesses how the Proposed Development sits within the overarching planning framework and sets out how the Proposed Development addresses and complies with the pertinent planning strategy and policy. The overarching purpose of the Report is to demonstrate that the Proposed Development is in accordance with proper planning and sustainable development for the area, demonstrating why it should be approved by WCC accordingly.

2. Background & Legislative Context

The layout, arrangement and components of the Proposed Development were determined following a robust analysis of three proposed Options. AECOM conducted this analysis, through a comparative process assessed against geometric, economic, durability & maintenance, environmental, construction & buildability and ground conditions considerations. This analysis determined that the layout associated with the Proposed Development was the most appropriate, with the structural design most technically achievable at the proposed location as well as presenting the least impact on the environment and requiring the lowest amount of land take.

With WCC acting as the Applicant on this application, it is forwarded under Part 8 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 – 2024, which covers development "*by, on behalf of, or in partnership with Local Authorities*". Article 80 of Part 8 of the Planning Regulations sets out classes of 'Development prescribed for the purposes of Section 179¹ of the Act', amongst which is "*(c) the construction of a bridge or tunnel*", hence the progression of this application under Part 8.

Article 81 of Part 8 of the Regulations requires the Local Authority to give public notice of the proposed works. A site notice was erected at 2no. locations at the subject site [Please refer to Drawing WPAR-ACM-GEN-SW-DR-ZZ-0001], with a newspaper notice published in the Wicklow Times on October 15th, 2024 (copies of which accompany this application).

The lands within the subject site are owned by the Department of Education, Mr. Noel Healy and Iamr  d   ireann/CI  . In accordance with Article 22(2)(g) of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 – 2024, letters of consent / support from the three landowners are provided as part of the Application package.

3. Need for the Proposed Development

The primary need for the Proposed Development is to implement a safe, direct, and high-quality pedestrian and cycle link across the Dublin Rosslare railway line, connecting Station Road [L1701] and the Wicklow Port Access Road (PAR) [R999], whilst encouraging and promoting modal shift towards walking and cycling and public transport usage. The Proposed Development will also greatly enhance the permeability of Wicklow Train Station and East Glendalough School (directly west of the station), as well as the existing residential and community facilities surrounding the subject site.

¹ Local Authority Own Development

The principal objectives of the Proposed Development are to achieve the following:

- To provide a high-quality pedestrian and cycle link that will significantly improve cycling and walking journey times between the Wicklow PAR and Station Road;
- To provide suitable vehicle and bus parking / set down facilities for Wicklow Train Station accessed from the Wicklow PAR; and
- To provide infrastructure that will encourage modal shift to cycling, walking and rail transport.

Ultimately, the Proposed Development's aim is to reduce the high levels of congestion currently experienced at peak times on the R750 regional road and Station Road local road, by enhancing the pedestrian and cyclist infrastructure, whilst creating a new connection point to the Wicklow PAR, further alleviating the existing peak time congestion within the area.

4. Existing Site

4.1 Site Location and Surrounding Environs

The Proposed Development is to be located at and north of Platform 1 at Wicklow Station, towards the northernmost extremities of Wicklow Town, centred at Irish Traverse Mercator (ITM) coordinates of (approximately) x: 730712, y: 694831, as per (red) in Figure 4-1 below. The Proposed Development is situated wholly within the townlands of Bollarney North. Wicklow Town Centre is situated approximately 950m south of the subject site. The subject site lies between the R999 Drumkay Road (north) and the R750 Dublin Road (south) and is accessed via Station Road (L1701).

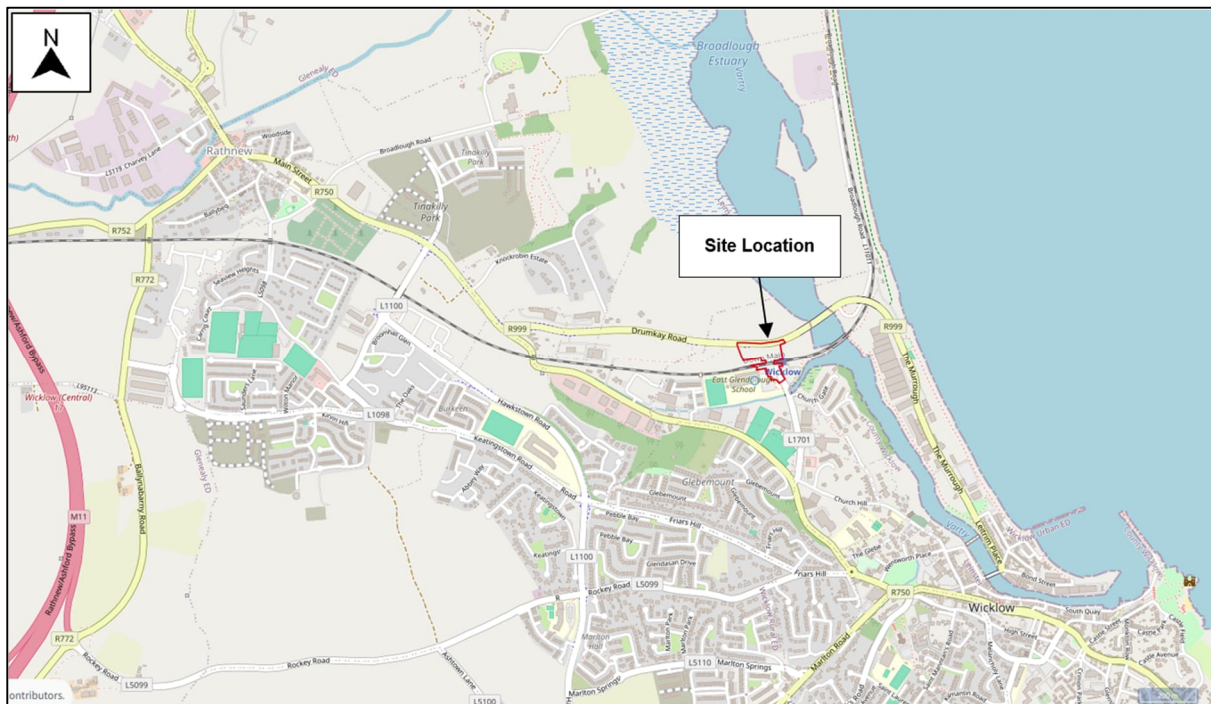


Figure 4-1: Subject Site Location²

The subject site occupies a polygonal area of land to the north of Wicklow Town, traversing the Dublin - Rosslare railway line. Commencing at a point on Station Road, the subject site also contains a section of the carpark associated with Wicklow Station (on the east of Station Road) and brownfield land (on the west of Station Road), before crossing the railway line and green space (between the railway line and the R999), as well as extending partially onto the footpath and cycle track adjacent to the R999. The bridge and associated platform infrastructure will be located to the immediate southwest of the current footbridge and station complex. There is currently no access directly from the Wicklow PAR to Station Road or the Wicklow Train Station.

² Extract from [OpenStreetMap](#) – Annotations Added

Located within a developing area at the north extremity of Wicklow Town, the surrounding area is moderately built-up. The northern aspects of the subject site are devoid of any built structures or key features. The lands to the north of the Wicklow Train Station are bounded by the Wicklow PAR/R999, which is routed parallel to the railway approximately 100m north of the Wicklow Train Station, upon which lies the existing footpath and cycle track to which the Proposed Development is to connect. North of the railway line, the area is dominated by large agricultural fields, bordered by a corridor of scrub and trees along the railway line and its northern boundary.

On the southern side of the railway line the main Wicklow Train Station and its associated carpark are located immediately east. Church Gate housing estate is located c.120m south-east of the subject site (separated by grassed land), with the Wicklow County Council buildings and the Wicklow Fire Station on Station Road located c.120m south. Wicklow Town AFC's pitches and the Coral Leisure Centre lie to the south-west, whilst Wicklow Hockey Club and East Glendalough Secondary School lie immediately west. Other key features in proximity include Broad Lough / River Vartry and 'the Iron Bridge' across the River Vartry (c.170m east), which flows into Wicklow Harbour c.1.45km south-east of the subject site. The Glebe Stream, connecting to the River Vartry, flows c.50m south.

There is also a park and ride facility, with capacity of 80 parking spaces located immediately south of the station ticket office. A river walk and nature trail commence at the rear of the park and ride facility on Station Road. The trail follows the boundary of the carpark and railway to the River Vartry, which is located approximately 200m to the east of Station Road. A pedestrian bridge also provides linkage onto the Murrough. The subject site is bordered to the north by the Wicklow Port Access Road which provides connection to an area east of the Broad Lough Estuary which contains the Wicklow Port, mix of commercial properties, residential areas, educational facilities, and other community services.

Regarding the crossed railway line, there is a low frequency level of train services, 5 no. services each way daily, that run from Dublin's Connolly Station to Rosslare Europort, as well as services from the Dublin commuter line that bypasses Wicklow Train Station daily. An hourly DART service has been proposed to service the Station in the future. The 133 Bus Éireann route from the Dublin Connolly LUAS stop runs to Wicklow Main Street, via Bray, with a medium/high frequency level, with the Wexford connect also running services from Wicklow Town.

An overview of the subject site in the context of its surrounding environs is presented below in Figure 4-2.

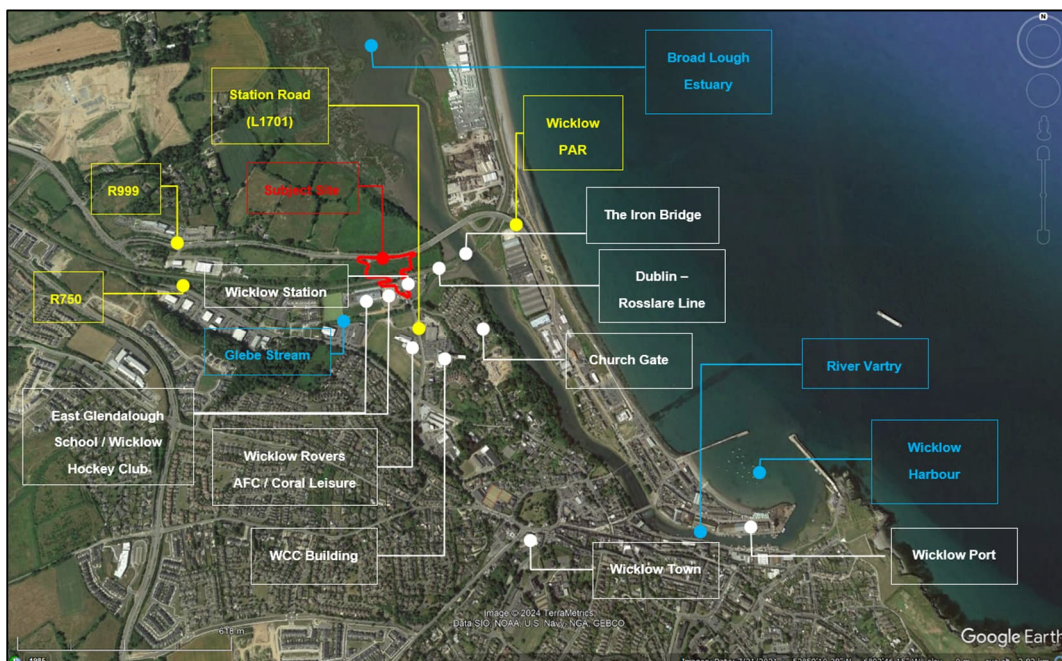


Figure 4-2: Subject Site and Surrounding Environs³

4.2 Site Description

Currently, the subject site contains a mix of roadway, railway line, open green space, hardscaped carparking and hardscaped brownfield land. It is bounded by the R999 to the north, Wicklow Train Station and its carpark to the

³ Extract from Google Earth Pro – Annotations Added

east, Station Road and open space to the south and East Glendalough School / Wicklow Hockey Club to the west. Station Road is a cul-de-sac that begins at the junction of the R750 Regional Road and extends for approximately 430m, providing access into the Wicklow Train Station. There are footpaths on either side of the road, but no cyclist or active travel facilities are currently present. There is currently no direct access from the train station or Station Road to the Wicklow Port Access Road.

In its present siting the site is notably devoid of physical built structures, with the exception of a signal box structure adjoined to the existing footbridge across the railway line and a gable-like wall. A cycle track and footpath are present on the R999, to which the Proposed Development is to connect, and so the Proposed Development represents a (currently) missed opportunity to connect to the R999.

The subject site is located upon an agricultural field with semi-improved grassland north of the railway line, a corridor of scrub and trees along the railway line, amenity grassland with mature trees associated with the East Glendalough Secondary School, and part of the regional road R999 and Station Road. The area of green space within the site boundary currently consists of unkempt open grass land, transected by overhead cables and associated support pillars and bordered by scattered vegetation. An existing access, secured by in swinging double gates, is present on the R999.

There are several existing services, utilities, and lighting columns around the subject site [Please refer to Drawing WPAR-ACM-VUT-SW-DR-CU-0001]. Lighting columns are positioned on both sides of Station Road along the school grounds and the park and ride facility. There are also CCTV cameras fitted to the lighting columns within the park and ride facility. Sited upon the lands directly north of the Wicklow Train Station are 3 no. existing wooden Electricity Supply Board (ESB) poles supporting medium voltage overhead lines.

5. Proposed Development

The Wicklow Port Access Road Link scheme involves the development of a new pedestrian and cycle bridge over the Dublin to Rosslare railway line, including access lifts and stairs to Wicklow railway station and the provision of a new carpark and a set-down area to the north of the station. The aim of the scheme is to provide a high-quality pedestrian and cycle link between the Wicklow Port Access Road (PAR), Wicklow Train Station and Station Road.

The Wicklow Port Access Road Link Project site area is approximately 13,400 m² (1.34hectares (ha)) and includes the following:

- Construction of a parking and setdown facility that will include 3no. bus parking spaces, setdown area, 27no. private vehicle parking spaces (including 3no. electric vehicle bays), 3no. disabled parking spaces and 3no. age friendly parking spaces.
- Construction of cycle tracks and footpaths.
- Construction of a pedestrian and cycle bridge spanning Dublin to Rosslare Railway line to accommodate of 5.5m wide cycle track and footpath.
- Installation of 3 no. stair structures, 1no. ramp structure which will accommodate an underground Bike Parking Facility and 2no. lifts.
- Soft and hard landscaping plus public lighting.
- All associated site and engineering works.
- All associated accommodating works.

The general arrangement of the Proposed Development is presented below in Figure 5-1.

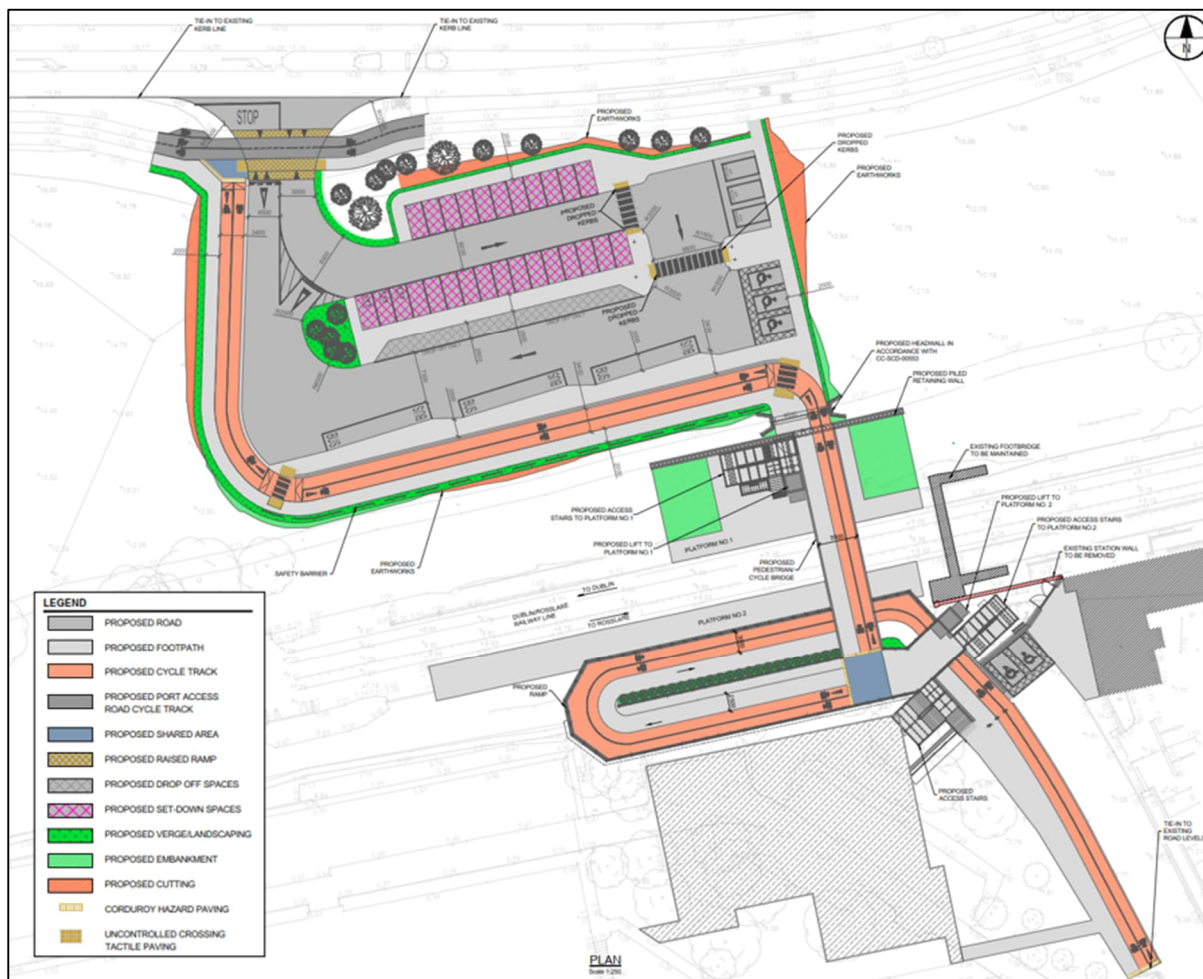


Figure 5-1: General Arrangement of Proposed Development⁴

5.1 Proposed Vehicle and Bus Parking / Set Down Facilities

The Proposed Development has been designed with the provision of 3 no. bus set-down spaces in a sawtooth arrangement at a 5-degree angle to the pedestrian ‘waiting area’ of the island bus stop arrangement

A parallel drop off bay that can accommodate up to 4 no. cars or two busses is located along the southern side of the central footpath. The car park also includes 24 no. private car parking spaces, 3 no. private electric vehicle parking spaces, 3 age friendly spaces and 3 no. disabled spaces.

The horizontal alignment and carriageway width of the internal roads has been designed to cater for large vehicle access such as buses and coaches. Pedestrian walkways have been proposed around the set-down area to provide access between the set-down area, Wicklow PAR at two locations, and the proposed bridge and platform access structures. A two-way cycle track is proposed along the western and southern side of the set-down area providing a route for cyclists between the Wicklow PAR cycle facilities and the proposed bridge. An additional pedestrian only entrance to the set-down area will be located at the north-east corner of the site for pedestrian facilities only. The width of the two-way cycle track has been defined as 3.4m, in accordance with the Cycle Design Manual. Pedestrian facilities provided throughout the site have a minimum width of 2.0m. A width of minimum 3.0m has been provided for a bus stop island area. Safety barriers to be placed at the top of the railway embankment above Platform No.1. Soft landscaping and public lighting will also be provided, detailed in Drawings WPAR-ACM-HGN-SW-DR-CH-1000 and WPAR-ACM-HLG-SW-DR-EO-1001.

⁴ Extract from Drawing WPAR-ACM-HGN-SW-DR--CH1000

5.2 Proposed Pedestrian and Cycle Bridge

The Proposed Development will include a pedestrian and cycle bridge crossing the Dublin to Rosslare railway. The span of the proposed bridge is approximately 33.3m which accommodates a set-back of 4.5m from the nearside rail running line to the bridge supports. The minimum vertical clearance will be 5.3m from top of the tracks to the soffit/underside of the bridge. The bridge has a width of 5.5m. A 3m wide two-way cycle track provided on the east side and a 2.5m wide footway on the west side. The proposed parapets will be stainless steel with a height of 1.8m.

Access to the bridge from the south will be via pedestrian steps and a ramp for cyclists and pedestrians, with a minimum 2.5m headroom clearance. These will be located to the southwest of the railway station building in an area currently occupied by hard standing at the northern end of Station Road and the hedgerow bounding the railway line to the south. A non-slip combined surfacing and waterproofing system will be applied to the deck. Safety bollards are to be installed at either end of the proposed link.

The design / structure of the proposed Bridge is presented below in Figure 5-2.

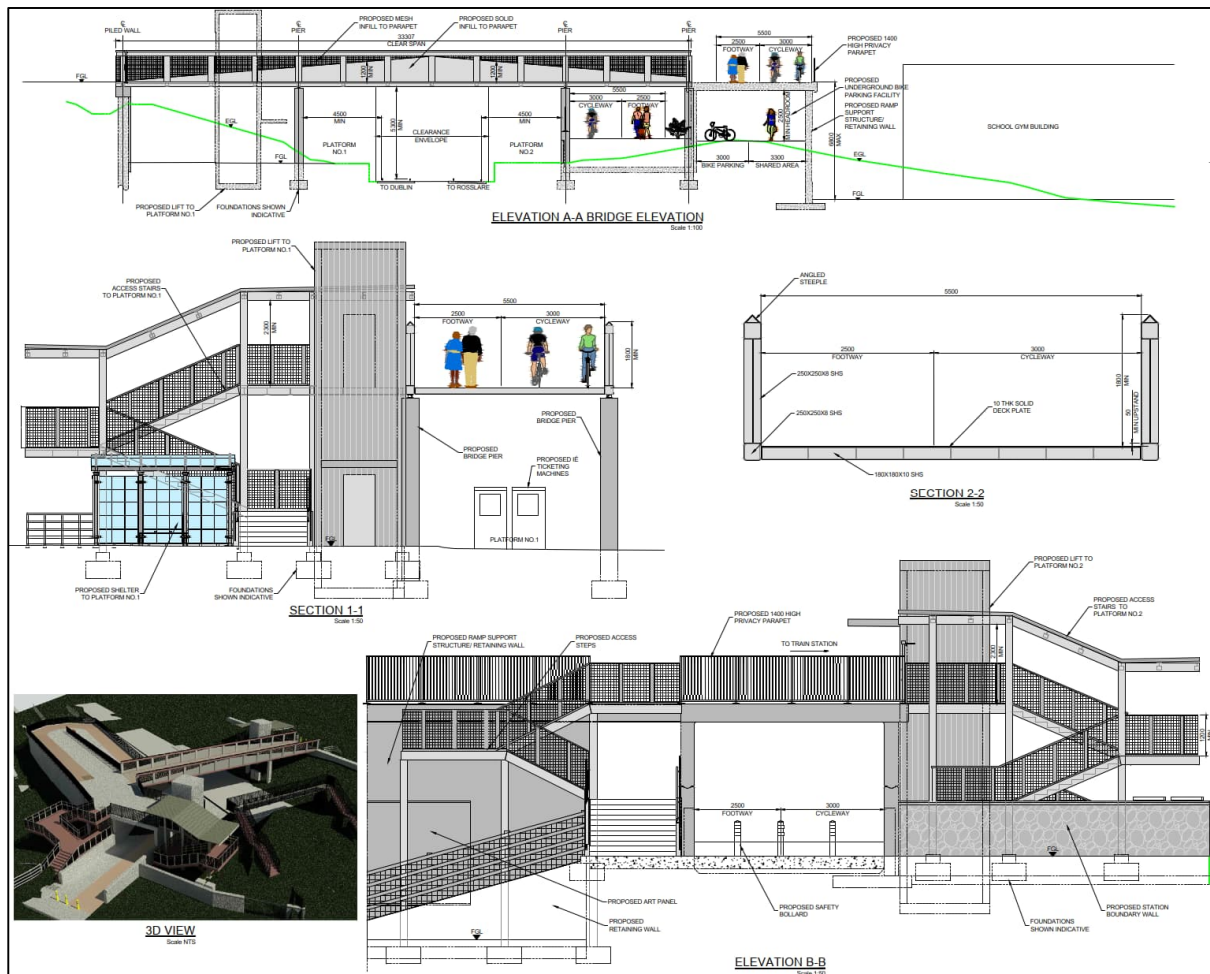


Figure 5-2: Proposed Bridge Structure⁵

5.3 Proposed Access Structures

Stair structures (3No.) will be provided as part of the Proposed Development. 2No. stair structures will provide access to Platform No.1 and No.2 and the third stair structure will connect station road to the proposed bridge plus the underground bike parking facility. All platform stair structures will have access gates which will be closed outside /train station hours. The south access ramp and bridge will provide a 24-hour link between Station Road and Wicklow PAR. The south ramp maintains the minimum cyclable radius of 5.5m on the inner edge of the cycleway which will transect under the proposed bridge with a vertical clearance of 2.5m. The ramp structure will

⁵ Extract from Drawing WPAR-ACM-SBR-SW-DR-CB-3002

be constructed with reinforced concrete with the south ramp accommodating art panels for East Glendalough school.

2no. lifts will also be provided for use by cyclists and pedestrians alike, as well as accessible needs users, accommodating for access to the proposed bridge and the proposed underground bike parking facility. The northern lift shaft is to be located on the west side of the proposed bridge, directly adjacent to proposed access stairs to Platform No.1. The access stairs and lift to Platform No.2 will be located to the east of the shared area at the southern abutment. The existing boundary wall will be replaced with a new boundary wall constructed with rendered blockwork which will extend diagonally southwest from the northwest corner of the porch.

Lighting will be a mix of Luminaire A, through to Luminaire G, with a total of 139 lights installed across the site. Lamps will vary, as per drawing WPAR-ACM-HLG-SW-DR-EO-1001 submitted with the application package and will consist of a klm lamp flux between 0.97 and 10.76.

An overview of the layout of the proposed access structures is presented below in Figure 5-3.

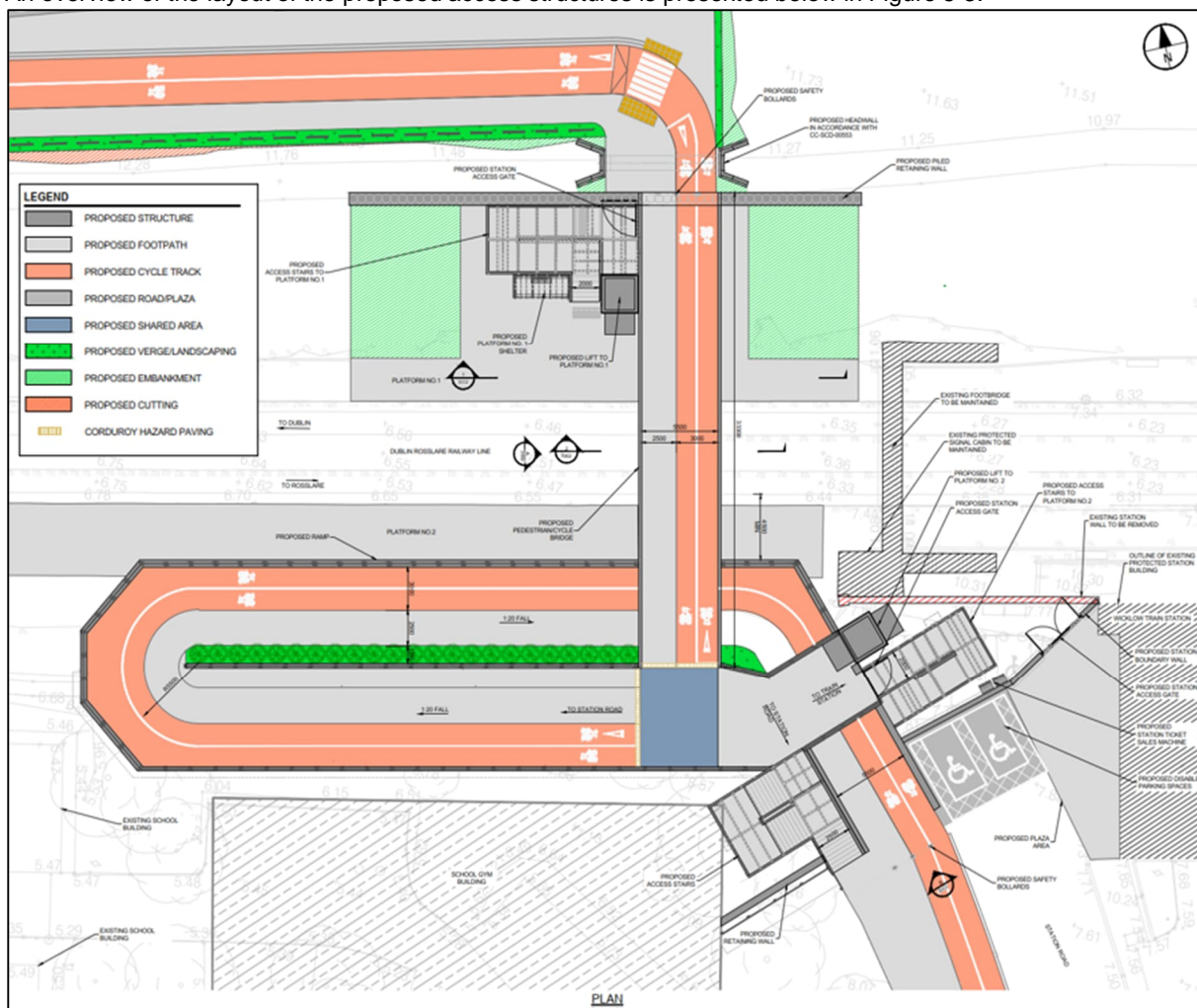


Figure 5-3: Proposed Access Structures⁶

6. Planning History

A desktop review of Wicklow County Council's online planning portal, MyPlan.ie's National Planning Application database and An Bord Pleanála's online portal was undertaken on September 10th, 2024, taking account of onsite development and applications within the immediate environs. It is noted that no previous planning history was recorded within the redline boundary of the subject site, however previous approvals were noted on the immediate south-east and west boundaries. No previous applications were recorded north of the railway line. The

⁶ Extract from Drawing WPAR-ACM-SBR-SW-DR-CB-3001

relevant applications are detailed below in Table 6-1, with it noted that applications older than 10-years were excluded for lack of relevance.

Table 6-1: Planning History Within Subject Site Environs

Planning Ref.	Site Address	Development	Grant Date	Proximity to Subject Site
20627	Station Road, Wicklow Town	alterations to previously approved planning reference 19/211. The proposed development consists of the provision of a 710.7 sqm 8.85m high sports hall business with high level glazing facing south and north, ancillary spaces and all associated site works	22/09/2020	Immediately west
19211	East Glendalough School, Station Road, Wicklow	provision of a 1,350 sqm, 8.85m high sports hall building, ancillary spaces and all associated site works to the east of the existing school building	05/11/2019	Immediately west
19717	County Buildings Car Park, Station Road, Wicklow	solar carports	03/10/2019	c.100m south-east
181354	County Buildings, Wicklow	extension and upgrade works to the Council Chamber and refurbishment of Foyer Area	07/03/2019	c.200m south
16415	Station Road, Wicklow	1.8m high V Mesh fencing and entrance gates to existing Soccer Club grounds	18/07/2016	c.100m south-west

Whilst there is no recent site-specific planning history, the approvals identified in Table 6-1 above (and supported by a search of applications in the wider environs) highlight a favourable precedent of successful approvals / grants within the environs of the subject site. The approvals bordering the immediate boundaries of the subject site, as set out in Table 6-1 above, are very much restricted to minor and localised applications on existing premises which are highly unlikely to impact negatively upon the Proposed Development, with a similar lack of impact upon these existing premises expected from the Proposed Development. Likewise, given the minor contents of the approvals, any risk of cumulative impact during construction is considered to be minimal and of no concern (as further supported in accompanying environmental reports - 60647343-ZZ-RP-ACM-EN-0001- AA Screening Report and 60647343-ZZ-RP-ACM-EN-0003- EIA Screening Report).

The planning history of the immediate environs showcases the mixed-uses present in the area, confirming no set or specific character, allowing for the introduction of the Proposed Development without detracting from the character and appearance of its surrounding environs. The Proposed Development is to be seen as a complimentary introduction that will assimilate with and benefit the uses and premises present in its environs, providing a much needed link to implement a safe, direct, and high-quality pedestrian and cycle link across the Dublin Rosslare railway line, connecting Station Road and the Wicklow PAR, whilst encouraging and promoting modal shift towards walking and cycling and public transport usage, to the benefit of station users and for users of adjacent premises, including East Glendalough School, which will see the pupil numbers increasing from 360 to 510 in the future.

7. Planning Policy Context

The receiving planning policy environment for the Proposed Development is outlined in the following pertinent planning documents. A list of the relevant policies assessed are listed below in Table 7-1.

Table 7-1: Overview of Assessed Planning Documents

Level	Document	Period
National	National Planning Framework	2018 – 2030
	National Development Plan	2018 – 2040
	National Investment Framework for Transport Ireland	2021 – 2040
	National Sustainable Mobility Policy	2022 – 2030
	Programme for Government – Our Shared Future	2020 – 2025
	Climate Action Plan	2024
Regional	Eastern and Midlands Regional Assembly – Regional Spatial Economic Strategy	2019 – 2031

Level	Document	Period
	Greater Dublin Area Transport Strategy	2016 – 2035
Local	Wicklow County Development Plan	2022 – 2028
	Wicklow-Rathnew Development Plan	2013 – 2019

7.1 National Policy

7.1.1 National Planning Framework 2040

The National Planning Framework (NPF) is the Government's high-level strategic plan for shaping the future growth and development of Ireland to 2040. The NPF's overarching aim is to improve the different areas of daily life, whilst bringing the various government departments, agencies, state owned enterprises and local authorities together behind a shared set of strategic objectives for all development.

The NPF is driven by ten National Strategic Outcomes (NSOs). Of prominent relevance to the Proposed Development are:

NSO1: Compact Growth

Carefully managing the sustainable growth of compact cities, towns and villages, it is stated, will add value and create more attractive places in which people can live and work. *"All urban settlements contain many potential development areas, centrally located and frequently publicly owned, that are suitable and capable of re-use to provide housing, jobs, amenities and services, but which need a streamlined and co-ordinated approach to their development, with investment in enabling infrastructure and supporting amenities, to realise their potential".*

Activating these strategic areas and achieving effective density and consolidation, rather than more sprawl of urban development, is a top priority. The Proposed Development, given its nature and location, would provide a key service at a suitable location, whilst also acting as enabling infrastructure to services and facilities within its environs.

NSO1, in further support of the Proposed Development, seeks to *"Improve accessibility to and between centres of mass and scale and better integration with their surrounding areas"* and to *"Ensure transition to more sustainable modes of travel (walking, cycling, public transport)"*. Combined with this, NSO1 is focused on infill development, integrated transport and promoting regeneration and revitalisation of urban areas.

NSO4: Sustainable Mobility

By 2040, NSO4 seeks to ensure that cities and towns will enjoy a cleaner, quieter environment free of combustion engine driven transport systems. NSO4, likewise, offers support for the Proposed Development in seeking to *"Expand attractive public transport alternatives to car transport to reduce congestion and emissions and enable the transport sector to cater for the demands associated with longer-term population and employment growth in a sustainable manner"*. Furthermore, it aims to *"Develop a comprehensive network of safe cycling routes in metropolitan areas to address travel needs"*.

Policies / Objectives

The NPF is shaped around a series of National Policy Objectives (NPO), with an aim to set the context for regional and local planning policy. Of relevance to / in support of the Proposed Development are the following NPO's:

- **NPO4:** Ensure the creation of attractive, liveable, well designed, high quality urban places that are home to diverse and integrated communities that enjoy a high quality of life and well-being.
- **NPO 6:** Regenerate and rejuvenate cities, towns and villages of all types and scale as environmental assets, that can accommodate changing roles and functions, increased residential population and employment activity and enhanced levels of amenity and design quality, in order to sustainably influence and support their surrounding area.
- **NPO7:** Reversing the stagnation or decline of many smaller urban centres, by identifying and establishing new roles and functions and enhancement of local infrastructure and amenities.

- **NPO27:** Ensure the integration of safe and convenient alternatives to the car into the design of our communities, by prioritising walking and cycling accessibility to both existing and proposed developments and integrating physical activity facilities for all ages.

“Encouraging new roles and functions for buildings, streets and sites” and *“Making better use of under-utilised land and buildings, including ‘infill’, ‘brownfield’”*, are overarching objectives of the NPF, with the Proposed Development representing a distinctive use of (mostly) brownfield land, turning mainly underutilised hardscaped land and unkempt green space into a key connecting pedestrian / cycle bridge, providing a new key enabling function for the station site and surrounding uses and services.

“Enhancing public health by encouraging and facilitating more active lifestyles by creating a more walkable and cycling friendly urban environment” is another of the NPF’s overarching aims, in direct support of the Proposed Development and its objectives. The NPF seeks to move away from the ‘business as usual approach’ often deployed in Towns and Centres and actively aims to *“enable investment that supports our centres and towns”*, with consideration of the key links to rail services and the PAR that the Proposed Development will provide.

Chapter 6.2 of the NPF notes that *“Communities that are designed in a way that support physical activity, e.g. generously sized footpaths, safe cycle lanes, safe attractive stairways and accessible recreation areas, all encourage residents to make healthy choices and live healthier lives”*. The Proposed Development will provide segregated footpaths and cycle tracks, with safe bike parking facility and accessible ramps, lifts and stairs to benefit all users. The Proposed Development would, furthermore, present a realistic alternative to the private car, aiding climate / transport targets and so, consequently, the principle of the Proposed Development is supported by the overarching planning framework.

7.1.2 National Development Plan 2021 – 2030

The National Development Plan (NDP) was published in October 2021 and aims to facilitate the implementation of the NSOs within the NPF. As part of Project Ireland 2040, the revised NDP sets out the Government’s overarching investment strategy and budget for the period up to 2030. The primary purpose of the revised NDP aims to balance the demand for public investment across all sectors and regions of Ireland, with a specific emphasis on improving the delivery of infrastructure projects.

The revised NDP sets out details of a new National Active Travel Programme which will complement the active travel investments in cities, towns and villages. This investment will support the delivery of significant levels of new and improved walking and cycling infrastructure by 2025.

With regard to strategic investment, the revised NDP recognises the importance of active travel in towns and villages and is committed to the development of walking and cycling infrastructure. The allocated investment is a positive sign of the current Government’s commitment to the development of a sustainable mobility system that can provide a modal shift from private car use, where feasible, in support of the Proposed Development.

Chapter 9 of the NDP is focused on facilitating the delivery of NSO4 (as laid out in Section 7.1.1 above). The NDP identifies the importance of significant investment in sustainable mobility (active travel and public transport) networks to deal with the projected growth levels of the NPF, further outlining that investing in high-quality sustainable mobility will help improve the quality of life and support a transition to a low-carbon society whilst simultaneously enhancing economic competitiveness. This, it is noted in Section 3.9 of the NPD, can be achieved by providing the below, all of which will be accommodated by the Proposed Development.

- *comfortable and affordable journeys to and from work, home, school, college, shops and leisure.*
- *travelling by cleaner and greener transport; and*
- *a shift away from the private car to greater use of active travel (walking and cycling) and public transport.*

The NDP acknowledges that *“Infrastructure investment is seen as main cornerstones to regional development”*. This investment is best utilised for town and village regeneration, as well as improvements in regional and local transport and road infrastructure. €360 million has been committed to the development of walking and cycling infrastructure throughout Ireland.

The concept of ‘Compact Growth’ is referenced by the NDP. The NDP denotes that *“All our urban settlements contain many potential development areas, centrally located and frequently publicly owned, that are suitable and capable of being developed to provide...amenities and community services, but which need a streamlined and co-ordinated approach to their development, with investment in enabling infrastructure and supporting amenities”*. The Proposed Development has the potential to act as this enabling infrastructure, providing a new link to lands

with a zoning objective that specifically aims to provide for enterprise and employment development in the form of light industry, warehousing, and logistics development. The connection of these lands to Wicklow Port and to Wicklow town centre along with the direct links to Wicklow Train Station, is to be considered a positive incentive for attracting future enterprise and employment opportunities.

Ultimately, in consideration of the Proposed Development, the NDP is focused on “*Catalysing the shift towards accessibility-based mobility systems*”. This NDP, it is stated in Chapter 8, “*will also support the expansion of sustainable mobility options and expanded active travel infrastructure*”. ‘Active Travel’ is identified as a key ‘Strategic Investment Priority’, with Chapter 9 stating that “*Improved and expanded sustainable mobility services and infrastructure can also act as an enabler of the NPF’s commitment toward the compact growth of the cities, towns and villages within their existing urban footprint*”.

The NDP provides for significant investment in active travel infrastructure over the next ten years in terms of expanding sustainable mobility options in cities, towns and villages and supporting compact growth. Consequently, the principle of the Proposed Development is supported by the overarching planning framework in the Country, by providing a key alternative to the car that can facilitate a shift in perception towards movement, whilst providing access for all users, regardless of their ability.

7.1.3 National Investment Framework for Transport in Ireland (2021 – 2040)

The National Investment Framework for Transport in Ireland (NIFTI) was published in December 2021. The NIFTI identifies investment priorities to address key transport challenges and ensures that transport investment is aligned with and supports the Government’s overarching spatial and climate change objectives. In addition, the NIFTI has been developed to ensure consistency with the overarching NSOs articulated in the NPF.

To enable the NSO’s of the NPF, particularly around decarbonising the transport system and delivering compact growth, “*a significant shift from low-occupancy private vehicles to more sustainable modes of travel will be required*”. The NIFTI sets out a hierarchy of travel modes to be accommodated and encouraged. Sustainable modes, starting with active travel (walking, wheeling and cycling), are to be encouraged over less sustainable modes such as the private car, with the objectives of the Proposed Development aligning wholly with these objectives.

In order to cater for rising travel demand, while decarbonising the transport sector, NIFTI aims to invest significantly in sustainable mobility. This includes improved access to sustainable mobility in towns and major investment in cycling and walking infrastructure to encourage a modal shift away from the private car. The NIFTI actively supports investments which allow people to access employment, services and leisure opportunities whilst encouraging a modal shift through the provision of high-quality active travel facilities and reducing the need to travel by private car, all of which the Proposed Development will provide for.

Active travel, it is emphasised, is the most sustainable mode of travel. Increasing the share of active travel can reduce the carbon footprint of the transport sector, improve air quality, reduce urban congestion, and bring about positive health impacts as a result of increased physical activity. It is also important in enabling access to other mobility options, such as public transport, especially in this instance given the proposed location and ease of access for pedestrians and cyclists, combined with the proposed set down area. “*The attractiveness of this mode is dependent on infrastructure—for example, dedicated footpaths, segregated cycle lanes and the quality and priority of road crossing points*”, as well as in this instance the active travel bridge, all of which will positively impact upon the number of people engaging in active travel. Encouraging a shift from private transport to these modes would mean fewer vehicles on the road per traveller and therefore deliver environmental benefits and reduced congestion.

The NIFTI identifies an ‘Intervention Hierarchy’ approach, with maintenance, optimisation and improvement of existing infrastructure (in this instance providing accessibility access to Wicklow Train Station) as another sustainable approach. Chapter 4.2.3 of the NIFTI notes that “*Given spatial constraints within our cities, it is essential that urban congestion is tackled through measures such as improved and expanded walking and cycling infrastructure*”, in support of the Proposed Development. “*By investing in infrastructure that is accessible by design, transport can support an integrated, diverse and inclusive society where all members can access essential services, participate in the economy, and contribute to their local communities*”. The Proposed Development is, consequently, wholly supportive of the key aims and objectives identified in the NIFTI and so is wholly aligned with it.

7.1.4 National Sustainable Mobility Policy (2022 – 2030)

The National Sustainable Mobility Policy (the Policy) aims to change daily travel choices by making it easier for people to travel by more sustainable modes. The Policy aims to support this modal shift through infrastructure and service improvements, as well as demand management and behavioural change measures, which are all provided for / incentivised by the Proposed Development.

The Policy, in support of the Proposed Development, seeks to facilitate a move away from the private car. *“In urban areas in particular, the focus will be on the sustainable movement of people rather than the movement of the private car”*. To deliver on this the Policy actively supports *“Developing pedestrian enhancement plans and cycle network plans to guide investment in new active travel infrastructure”*, alongside the expansion of walking and cycling facilities.

Figure 1 of the Policy identifies the range of benefits associated with active travel schemes, summarised as environmental, social, economic and health & well-being benefits. The Proposed Development will implement a safe, direct, and high-quality pedestrian and cycle link across the Dublin Rosslare railway line, connecting Station Road and the Wicklow PAR, whilst encouraging and promoting a modal shift towards walking and cycling and public transport usage to and from the station and surrounding services and facilities, allowing for connection to the school (and its predicted expanding pupil numbers), as well as supporting access to the Station for the proposed hourly DART services at the Station.

Chapter 4 of the Policy is entitled ‘Safe and Green Mobility’ and makes reference to how *“Well- designed, well-maintained, appropriately-lit, continuous and better integrated infrastructure can help people feel safe and encourage them to choose these options over the private car”*. Public lighting is to be installed as part of the Proposed Development. Lighting will be a mix of Luminaire A, through to Luminaire E, with a total of 139 lights installed across the site.

The Policy is shaped around key ‘Goals’. Those in support of the Proposed Development / to which the Proposed Development would contribute include:

- **Goal 1: Improve Mobility Safety** (The Proposed Development will provide safe access for pedestrians and cyclists across the railway line through the bridge and its segregated pedestrian / cycle paths).
- **Goal 4: Expand Availability of Sustainable Mobility in Regional and Rural Areas** (The Proposed Development will provide key Active Travel infrastructure within Wicklow Town).
- **Goal 5: Encourage People to Choose Sustainable Mobility Over the Private Car** (The Proposed Development will achieve a more balanced and sustainable pattern of movement in Wicklow Town and facilitate the provision of a greater choice of transport modes, allowing for ease of access for all users facilitated by its proposed lifts and ramps and cycle storage).

Ultimately, the Policy seeks to rebalance transport movement into and from urban centres, away from the private car and towards active travel. Consequently, the deliverables of the Proposed Development actively align with the overarching pursuits of the Policy.

7.1.5 Programme for Government – Our Shared Future (2020 - 2025)

The Programme for Government (the Programme) was published in October 2020. It proposes an ambitious vision to create reform and renewal that will help Ireland recover and thrive. The Programme recognises the enormous potential of cycling and walking in facilitating a high proportion of daily trips. The Government have committed an allocation of 10% of the total transport capital budget for cycling projects and an allocation of 10% of the total capital budget for pedestrian infrastructure.

The Programme is actively *“committed to a fundamental change in the nature of transport in Ireland”*. In addition, the Programme highlights the necessity for changes across all sectors, specifically *“Ensuring an unprecedented modal shift in all areas by a reorientation of investment to walking, cycling and public transport”*.

The Programme aims to *“promote cycling and pedestrian safety and enable this through improved design, [and] increased separation”*. The Proposed Development aligns with the Programme’s vision and directly supports the policies that it outlines, specifically in implementing cycling and walking infrastructure and enhancing accessibility to existing public transport nodes (train and DART services), with the primary aim to encourage and promote a sustainable transport modal shift *“in all areas by a reorientation of investment to walking, cycling and public*

transport'. Consequently, the Programme and its proposed deliverables are wholly supportive of the Proposed Development.

7.1.6 Climate Action Plan 2024

The Climate Action Plan 2024 (CAP24) is the third annual update to Ireland's Climate Action Plan and was published in December 2023. The Plan provides a roadmap for taking decisive action to halve Ireland's emissions by 2030 and reach net zero by no later than 2050.

CAP24 denotes that transport accounts for 17.1% of total emissions. Transport is one of the key sectors targeted by CAP24 for reductions in emissions. Amongst the key objectives is the need to "Accelerate the implementation of smart and sustainable mobility projects".

Chapter 15 of CAP24 is focused on Transport. In consideration of the nature and objectives of the Proposed Development, Chapter 15 acknowledges that "decoupling the direct correlation between transport emissions and wider social and economic activity thus forms the fundamental challenge for the sector". The focus, therefore, is on pursuing measures to address travel demand, by pursuing measures that promote greater efficiency in our transport system, allied with significant investment in sustainable alternatives, which will be provided for by the Proposed Development.

The recent CSO Census 2022 data has also highlighted that while levels of transport demand have increased, there are encouraging changes in behavioural trends and an appetite for change when the right type of investments and decisions are made at local and national level, offering insight into the potential that the Proposed Development will have for changing attitudes and promoting active travel.

To be a success, from a Climate perspective, there is a need to make active travel modes more attractive to shift away from car dependency through consideration of the proximity between people and places. Whilst the Proposed Development will not directly reduce emissions it will provide a key incentive to shift attitudes at a localised level, promoting active travel and negating the need for localised car journeys, thus aligning with the aims and objectives of CAP24.

7.2 Regional Policy

7.2.1 Eastern and Midlands Regional Assembly – Regional Spatial Economic Strategy 2019 – 2031

The Regional Spatial Economic Strategy (RSES) for the Eastern and Midland Region (EMR) sets out a framework to direct future growth of the EMR over the medium to long term, implementing the strategic planning framework set out in the NPF.

Achieving sustainable development patterns that promote compact growth, reduce transport demand and encourage low carbon transport modes is identified as one of the primary areas of transition for the region, another of which is the delivery of sustainable transport systems.

The RSES is shaped by 16 key objectives, entitled 'Regional Strategic Outcomes' (RSO). RSO's of relevance to the Proposed Development are:

- **RSO 2 Compact Growth and Urban Regeneration:** Promote the regeneration of our cities, towns and villages by making better use of under-used land and buildings.
- **RSO 4 Healthy Communities:** Protect and enhance the quality of our built and natural environment to support active lifestyles including walking and cycling, ensure clean air and water for all and quality healthcare and services that support human health.
- **RSO 6 Integrated Transport and Land Use:** Promote best use of Transport Infrastructure, existing and planned, and promote sustainable and active modes of travel to ensure the proper integration of transportation and land use planning.

Page 187 of the RSES further identifies the guiding principles with respect to community and social infrastructure with specific reference to "Support the '10 minute' settlement concept, whereby a range of community facilities and services are accessible in short walking and cycling timeframes from homes or accessible by high-quality public transport to these services in larger settlements".

The RSES explicitly refers to Wicklow-Rathnew as a Key Town in the core region, and as a major employment hub with a strong employment base that attracts workers from around the County. The largest sectors in the settlement are commerce, manufacturing, and education / health / public administration. There are also a number of potential business opportunities for expansion and a supply of undeveloped zoned employment land available, it is acknowledged. With it reminded that one of the key objectives of the Proposed Development is to improve access to the Port Access Road and, by extension, Wicklow Port and its associated businesses and operations, the 'Wicklow-Rathnew' Chapter of the RSES explicitly acknowledges a need to improve sustainable transport and "*promote compact growth with a focus on regeneration, development of the port and harbour area*".

Further supported by the Proposed Development, aligning with Section 4.6 of the RSES, is the promotion of development that includes renewal and reuse of underutilised land, whilst there is a stated need for 'enabling infrastructure' within Wicklow-Rathnew', with the RSES recognising issues with congestion and high-levels of car journeys and identifying a requirement for infrastructure to support alternative patterns of movement. Whilst it is recognised that there are good pedestrian and cycling facilities on new roads, "*there is potential for further investment in walking and cycling within the town and to enhance connections to surrounding urban centres and regional trails*". There is potential, it is furthered stated, to improve sustainable mobility through the enhancement of bus and rail services, with the Proposed Development allowing for ease of access to existing train and proposed DART services at the Station. "*Public transport improvements would improve the accessibility of Wicklow-Rathnew to Dublin and the wider area and would likely contribute to population and economic growth*", in recognition of the potential benefits of the Proposed Development, beyond providing safer and more accessible active travel infrastructure.

In addition, the RSES recognises the need to ensure any improvement to rail infrastructure is supported, under Regional Policy Objective (RPO) 4.58, which aims "*To support ongoing investment in rail infrastructure to ensure its continued renewal, maintenance and improvement to a high level to ensure high quality of frequency, safety, service, accessibility and connectivity*", with consideration of the location of the Proposed Development and its connections to the existing railway station and its train and proposed DART services.

Wicklow-Rathnew specific RPOs are laid out within the RSES. Of relevance / support to the Proposed Development is RPO 4.56 which actively aims to "*Support enhancement and expansion of Wicklow Port and Harbour*", in consideration of the Proposed Development's linkages to such.

RPO 8.2 recognises the need for integrated transport networks, offering support for the Proposed Development via its aim "*That future development is planned and designed in a manner which maximises the efficiency and protects the strategic capacity of the metropolitan area transport network, both existing and planned and to protect and maintain regional accessibility*". In line with RPO 8.4, the Proposed Development fully aligns with the National Transport Authority's (NTA) Transport Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area, as detailed below in Section 7.2.2.

The Proposed Development can contribute to the fulfilment of RPO 9.1, which seeks the delivery of healthy placemaking, determining that "*In planning for the creation of healthy and attractive places, there is a need to provide alternatives to the car and to prioritise and promote cycling and walking in the design of streets and public spaces*".

Ultimately the RSES seeks to strengthen walking / cycling accessibility and facilities within the Region, whilst facilitating modal shift to more sustainable transport options, ensuring full support for the Proposed Development and confirming the alignment of the Proposed Development with the overarching Regional Policy and its contribution to the fulfilment of several key objectives.

7.2.2 Greater Dublin Area Transport Strategy 2016 – 2035

The Transport Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area (GDA) was adopted by the Government in 2016. It has been an essential component, along with investment programmes in other sectors, for the development of the GDA which includes County Wicklow.

Of relevance, the Transport Strategy identifies the need for rail stations requiring upgrades to be improved. It further acknowledges that the appearance, quality and accessibility of rail stations can influence passengers' usage of the rail network. As part of on-going refurbishment and renewal works on rail stations, passenger focused facilities that improve the attractiveness and convenience of the rail system are encouraged, in support of the Proposed Development, further supported by the Proposed Development providing ease of access for those of all abilities facilitated via the proposed ramps, stairs and lifts, accessible from both sides of the track.

As outlined in Section **Error! Reference source not found.** of the Transport Strategy, the GDA Cycle Network Plan proposes to expand the urban cycle network. The Transport Strategy reiterates the intentions of the Cycle Network Plan to improve the quality of services available to all cyclists, along with encouraging new cyclists. The Transport Strategy has outlined multiple targets for investment in cycling. Of specific relevance / support to the Proposed Development is:

- Provide for sufficient on-street public cycle parking at key destinations such as bus and rail stations.

The Transport Strategy also recognises the negative impacts arising from poor pedestrian accessibility in locations throughout the GDA. In addition, the Transport Strategy has outlined multiple targets for investment in walking. Of specific relevance are:

- Support pedestrian permeability provision in new developments, and the maintenance, plus enhancement where appropriate, of such arrangements in existing developments; and
- Ensure that permeability and accessibility of public transport stops and stations for local communities is maintained and enhanced.

The Proposed Development will provide a high-quality pedestrian and cycle link between the Wicklow PAR, Wicklow Train Station and Station Road. The implementation of this link will significantly improve existing cycling and walking journey times and accommodate modal shift in journeys / transport, as well as reducing congestion. It is therefore considered to be fully supportive of the outlined investment targets set out in the GDA Transport Strategy.

7.3 Local Policy

7.3.1 Wicklow County Development Plan 2022 – 2028

The Wicklow County Development Plan (CDP) 2022 – 2028 sets out the strategic spatial framework for the proper planning and sustainable development of County Wicklow for the period between 2022 and 2028. The CDP Strategy is guided by three strategic principles – Healthy Placemaking, Climate Action and Economic Opportunity.

7.3.1.1 Overall Strategy

It is stated that “*The environment in which we live in has a significant impact on our health and well-being*”, affirming the high potential and incentives that the Proposed Development can provide as key physical infrastructure. Planning, it is noted in Chapter 2.1 of the CDP, has an important role to play in creating healthy places that enable a high quality of life. The CDP focuses intently on the concept of healthy place making, with attention again drawn to the objectives of the Proposed Development to implement a safe, direct, and high-quality pedestrian and cycle link across the Dublin Rosslare railway line, connecting Station Road and the Wicklow PAR, whilst facilitating a modal shift. The Proposed Development will also greatly enhance the permeability of Wicklow Train Station and East Glendalough School, as well as the existing residential, community and employment facilities surrounding the subject site, which is of particular relevance given the proposed expanded pupil numbers at the school and the proposed hourly DART services to the Station.

Building on the concepts detailed within the RSES, the CDP furthers that healthy placemaking includes the creation of attractive and sustainable communities to support active lifestyles “*including walking and cycling*”. To deliver on this, as will be accommodated by the Proposed Development, is an identified requirement for “*ongoing improvements to the physical and social infrastructure of urban centres*”. Furthermore, the Proposed Development seeks to encourage and promote a modal shift towards walking and cycling and public transport usage. With this considered, the CDP directly acknowledges that “*There is increasing consensus that the built environment can positively impact on people’s behaviour*”, confirming that the pursued modal shift is a realistic and an achievable objective if the appropriate infrastructure exists.

As defined within Chapter 2.2.2 of the CDP, the Proposed Development can indirectly contribute to climate change targets, contributing to the following identified aspects:

- *Delivery of sustainable settlement patterns, with a focus on compact growth.*
- *Promotion of environmentally sustainable development in terms of location, layout, design.*
- *Reduction in the need to use motorised vehicles, increased opportunities for walking and cycling.*
- *Reduction in journey length and times, reduction in congestion.*

- *Higher intensity of use of public transport.*

Chapter 2.4.3 of the CDP defines 10 'Strategic County Outcomes' (SCO) which shape development within Wicklow. Of relevance to the Proposed Development are:

SCO1 – Sustainable Settlement Patterns & Compact Growth

The Proposed Development comprises compact growth, localised to a small area within a key location at Wicklow Train Station. Making use of the unkempt and underutilised grassed area between the railway line and the R999 it will develop infill / brownfield land. By its nature it will encourage active lifestyles for residents, station users and the local schools and businesses, whilst the improved permeability across the existing physical barrier of the rail line also facilitates a more sustainable settlement pattern.

SCO2 – Resilient Town & Village Centres – Regeneration & Renewal

The Proposed Development supports physical renewal of the Station and adjacent brownfield land, activating potential for further renewal by the services, links and connections provided. As showcased in the accompanying drawings, the Proposed Development is resilient by design. It is a people focused development that will enhance the viability of the subject site and adjacent lands, creating a new connection point to the Wicklow PAR and improving journey times, whilst potentially reducing congestion by extension, and allowing for ease of access for those of all mobilities.

SCO4 – Sustainable Healthy Communities

The Proposed Development will implement a safe, direct, and high-quality pedestrian and cycle link across the Dublin Rosslare railway line, whilst encouraging and promoting modal shift towards walking and cycling and public transport usage. The Proposed Development will also greatly enhance the permeability of Wicklow Train Station and East Glendalough School, as well as the existing residential and community facilities surrounding the subject site.

SCO5 – Sustainable Mobility

The principal objectives of the Proposed Development align wholly with the concept of sustainable mobility. The Proposed Development will achieve a more balanced and sustainable pattern of movement in Wicklow Town and facilitate the provision of a greater choice of transport modes. In addition, it will allow for ease of access for all users, regardless of ability, facilitated by its proposed lifts and ramps and cycle storage for ease of access and segregated cycle and pedestrian tracks for safety and separation.

SCO7 – Climate Resilience & the Transition to a Low Carbon Economy

By its nature and pursued objectives, the Proposed Development has the potential to contribute to the overarching pursuit of climate resilience, by reducing the necessity for car journeys through the provision of a high-quality alternative, contributing to the reduction of congestion and emissions by extension, whilst the proposed set down facilities can incentivise a higher uptake of public transport usage to and from the Station.

7.3.1.2 Core Strategy

Chapter 3.6 of the CDP is focused on policies, actions and investment to deliver on transport and accessibility. A range of goals are set out for the area, notably an aim to improve average journey times, with it reminded that the Proposed Development can help alleviate congestion on the roadways and allow for improved journey times for pedestrians and cyclists through enhanced permeability. The CDP also actively prioritises the development of public transport services and walking / cycling facilities.

The CDP actively aims to “*Expand attractive public transport alternatives to car transport to reduce congestion and emissions and enable the transport sector to cater for the demands associated with longer term population and employment growth in a sustainable manner*”, to which the Proposed Development can actively contribute. The CDP further seeks to “*Develop a comprehensive network of safe cycling routes in metropolitan areas to address travel needs*”.

“*Of key importance to County Wicklow’s transportation and accessibility strategy, is the NTA’s Transport Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area*”, of which the Proposed Development is compliant with / supported by, as set out in Section 7.2.2 above.

7.3.1.3 Settlement Strategy

Table 3.3 of the CDP confirms that Wicklow-Rathnew is a 'Core Region Key Town'. Being located within this Core Region, Chapter 4.1 of the CDP defines an objective "*To promote continued growth, while providing for increased...services and functions to allow towns to become more self-sustaining and to create the quality of life to attract investment*", with recognition of the Proposed Development providing a key service and function that can, by extension, improve local resident's quality of life through ease of movement and improved permeability. Furthermore, it will allow for improved connections to schools, community facilities and commercial enterprises, including at Wicklow Port through the PAR. The Proposed Development further represents 'enabling infrastructure', promoting and providing for improved sustainability and ease of movement for surrounding schools, residencies and community facilities, offering the potential for a key form of access for the expanding pupil numbers at East Glendalough School and for non-vehicular connections to the existing train and proposed DART services at Wicklow Station.

Wicklow-Rathnew has a designated Chapter in the CDPs settlement strategy, where it is stated that "*Key regeneration opportunities include the development of Wicklow Port and Harbour, served by the port access road*". The Proposed Development seeks to improve permeability onto and from the PAR, providing a key link between the Port and Wicklow Station through the PAR. It is directly emphasised that "*There are opportunities for the densification and enhancement...and to improve pedestrian mobility and connectivity*" within the Town, in direct support of the Proposed Development.

With the Proposed Development targeted at encouraging modal shift and reducing congestion, the CDP recognises that "*Wicklow-Rathnew has high levels of car-based commuting to Dublin, with issues in relation to public transport capacity, particularly rail, and traffic congestion*", emphasising the opportunity presented by the Proposed Development in combatting these issues through the incentivisation of sustainable transport. Whilst recognised that there are good pedestrian and cycling facilities on new roads, it is denoted that "*there is potential for further investment in walking and cycling within the town and to enhance connections to surrounding urban centres and regional trails*". Similarly, the CDP identifies opportunities for the enhancement of sustainable mobility within the Town, through the enhancement of bus and rail services as well as park and ride facilities. It is stated that "*Public transport improvements would improve the accessibility of Wicklow-Rathnew to Dublin and the wider area and would likely contribute to population and economic growth*".

Settlement Strategy Objectives are presented in Chapter 4.3 of the CDP. Of relevance to / in support of the Proposed Development are:

- **CPO 4.1:** To implement the County Wicklow Core Strategy and Settlement Strategy, having regard to the availability of services and infrastructure and in particular, to direct growth into key towns.
- **CPO 4.4:** Support investment in infrastructure and services which aligns with the Core Strategy and Settlement Strategy.
- **CPO 4.5:** To ensure that all settlements, as far as is practicable, develop in a self-sufficient manner with population growth occurring in tandem with physical and social infrastructure and economic development. Development should support a compact urban form and the integration of land use and transport.
- **CPO 4.9:** To target the reversal of town and village centre decline through sustainable compact growth and targeted measures that address vacancy, dereliction and underutilised lands and deliver sustainable renewal and regeneration outcomes.

7.3.1.4 Town & Village Centres – Placemaking & Regeneration

The strength of settlements, it is stated in Chapter 5 of the CDP, lies in their capacity to accommodate a mix of uses in a compact, walkable environment that provides a high quality of life, with the Proposed Development acting directly as compact growth that provides walkable links to local and wider services and locations. Further to this objective is the need to promote infill / brownfield development to ensure towns are "*attractive, liveable, well designed, high quality places that are home to diverse and integrated communities that enjoy a high quality of life and wellbeing*", with the Proposed Development employing high-quality design and materials to deliver key infrastructure to promote active travel, by extension offering potential to positively influence the quality of life and health of the local community, all whilst utilising predominantly brownfield land.

Towns and villages are continually evolving, with the CDP setting out the essentialness of allowing towns to "*evolve and diversify*". The overarching strategy for Chapter 5 of the CDP is thus to "*Activate the potential for regeneration and renewal of our town and village centres, creating resilient, adaptable and vibrant places with a strong focus on creating compact towns and villages*". Key to this and supported by the Proposed Development are the following identified objectives:

- *Protect and maintain the future viability of town and village centres by facilitating a diverse mix of uses.*
- *Ensure that town and village 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.*
- *Maximise the use of public assets.*
- *Promote healthy placemaking and prioritise walking and cycling.*
- *Use public realm improvements to stimulate investment and economic confidence.*

With the improved permeability at a key public transport destination presented by the Proposed Development, it is acknowledged within Chapter 5.2 of the CDP that “*Successful centres need to be both accessible to the surrounding catchment area via a good road network and public transport facilities, and to encompass good local linkages between car parks, public transport stops and the various attractions within the centre*”.

Permeability and pedestrian activity are both acknowledged as two of the key components of quality placemaking, as per Chapter 5.3 of the CDP, with it noted that “*The permeability and safety of an area can be the determining factor in whether people walk or drive*”, again showcasing that the facilitation and encouragement of modal shift is both a realistic and achievable outcome. Healthy communities are a key consideration in the development of towns within Wicklow. The built environment, it is acknowledged, “*can positively impact on people’s behaviour and overall wellbeing*”. Healthy placemaking involves creating places that encourage and support healthier lifestyles, with the Proposed Development actively designed to encourage modal shift to cycling, walking and use of public transport.

The widening of the existing footpath will also support safety and physical activity. With further consideration of the proposed footpath widening, Chapter 5.3.2 of the CDP sets out that “*The Council will actively pursue public realm improvements and the provision of amenities that create more attractive places and encourage healthier lifestyles for people of all ages and abilities*” and that “*New development should be located and designed to prioritise walking and cycling especially for shorter journeys*”.

Town & Village Centre Objectives are presented in Chapter 5.6 of the CDP. Of relevance to / in support of the Proposed Development are:

- **CPO 5.9:** To facilitate and support well-designed development that will contribute to regeneration and renewal, consolidation of the built environment and include interventions in the public realm and the provision of amenities.
- **CPO 5.12:** To encourage the redevelopment of brownfield sites in order to maximise the sustainable regeneration of underutilised/vacant lands.
- **CPO 5.16:** To actively pursue and implement environmental and public realm improvements and provision of amenities that create more attractive places and encourage healthier lifestyles for all ages and abilities.
- **CPO 5.19:** To implement environmental and public realm improvements in town and village centres to a high standard and finish.
- **CPO 5.21:** To strengthen the urban structure of towns and villages by ensuring that any new development contributes to a coherent urban form, focused on a high-quality built environment of distinct character.

7.3.1.5 Social & Community Development

Chapter 7 of the CDP highlights WCC’s commitment to the delivery of the ‘10 minute’ settlement strategy, whereby a range of community facilities and services are accessible in short walking and cycling timeframes from homes or accessible by high-quality public transport, which the Proposed Development will contribute to through improved permeability for cyclists and pedestrians (across an existing physical barrier), reduced congestion and enhanced public transport links. The CDP further aims to deliver high-quality walking and cycling routes, emphasising the need for links to schools and community facilities.

The CDP acknowledges that “*The creation of healthy and attractive places requires ongoing improvements to the physical and social infrastructure of settlements*”. Chapter 7.2 emphasises the importance of facilitating improved physical access to community infrastructure and services, key to which is “*Promoting a development pattern that maximises the accessibility of social / community facilities infrastructure by public transport, cycle or foot*”.

The Proposed Development has been designed with consideration of the National Disability Authority’s document ‘Building for Everyone: A Universal Design Approach’, fully incorporating universal design and facilitating active usage by everyone, regardless of age, size or ability, whilst alleviating permeability issues over the railway line.

7.3.1.6 Economic Development

Table 9.1 of the CDP lays out the principles for economic growth within Wicklow, where the Proposed Development is shown to actively contribute towards the concept of 'Orderly Growth' "*facilitated by appropriate, effective and sustainable infrastructure development*". The Proposed Development is a necessary infrastructure to improve permeability and provide new links to the PAR, the key access road for the economic cluster at Wicklow Harbour. The regional ports are recognised in the CDP as important centres of economic activity, and the RSES seeks to protect and support the role of regional ports as economic drivers for the Region.

The Proposed Development further contributes to the creation of place, another key necessity to drive economic development, and allows for strategic access to Wicklow Train Station for commuters into and from Wicklow-Rathnew, whilst providing access to Enterprise and Employment zoned lands, as detailed in Section 8.2 below.

CPO 10.2 sets out "*To facilitate measures to improve the accessibility of centres by developing a pedestrian and cyclist friendly environment, which improves safety and limits traffic congestion where possible. It is the objective of the Council to promote accessibility to public transport. Development with a high potential for public transport utilisation by employees and visitors should be sited with ease of access to public transport facilities*", in appreciation of the direct connection to the railway station and extended connection to the Port.

7.3.1.7 Sustainable Transportation

In direct support of the deliverables of the Proposed Development, Chapter 12 of the CDP sets out that "*Integrating land use planning with transportation is key to addressing climate change, supporting economic prosperity and improving the quality of life*". Reducing the need to travel by private car and increasing the use of sustainable and healthy travel alternatives, can bring multiple benefits to the climate, local environment and communities, with the Proposed Development offering significant potential to deliver on this, through the provision of key infrastructure to encourage such a shift, especially for users of the Station and adjacent school.

Chapter 12 of the CDP explicitly states that "*The Council will continue to provide for all components of the transportation system which are within its own remit*". It is the aim of the CDP to produce settlements of such form and layout that facilitates and encourages sustainable forms of movement and transport, prioritising active travel modes of walking and cycling, and for larger settlements, public transport. "*Facilitating modal shift to more sustainable transport options*" forms a key objective of the CDP in direct alignment with the Proposed Development. The CDP, in explicit support of the Proposed Development, seeks to deliver this through:

- *any associated infrastructure development that deliver improvements to public transport infrastructure and services, in particular the upgrading of the Dublin – Rosslare train line.*
- *Promotion of development patterns that facilitate the delivery of local public transport links within towns.*
- *Delivering improvements to the pedestrian environment and promoting walking as a mode of transport through the provision of new, and improvement of existing, walking facilities throughout the County.*
- *Delivering improvements to cycling facilities and promoting cycling as a mode of transport through the provision of new, and improvement of existing, cycling facilities throughout the County.*

With the potential to reduce / alleviate congestion, the Proposed Development is further supported by the CDP which pursues "*More effectively managing vehicular traffic and car parking in town and village centres to make public transport, walking and cycling more attractive option for availing of town / village centre services*", in order to alleviate bottlenecks and hazards on the road network.

Like much of the CDP, Chapter 12 is shaped around the three pillars of sustainability. To deliver on these pillars, the CDP sets objectives of "*Enhancing the built environment by fostering more sustainable and compact development patterns, reducing car and car parking dominance, and improving safety for pedestrians and cyclists*" and "*Improving access for all to employment, services and amenities, such as education, healthcare, shops, parks, leisure and social interactions*". It furthermore acknowledges the health and wellbeing benefits provided by active travel infrastructure and the potential of such infrastructure to reduce car dependency and, by extension, emissions. Chapter 12.1.1 determines the provision of walking and cycling infrastructure as being the most environmentally friendly transport investment.

Sustainable Transportation Objectives are presented in Chapter 12.7 of the CDP. Of relevance to / in support of the Proposed Development are:

- **CPO 12.1:** Through coordinated land-use and transport planning, to reduce the demand for vehicular travel and journey lengths by facilitating initiatives like carpooling and park and ride.

- **CPO 12.2:** Through sustainable planning and investment in transport infrastructure, including roads and public transport systems, to reduce journey times, length, congestion and to increase the attractiveness of public transport.
- **CPO 12.11:** To improve existing or provide new pedestrian and cycling infrastructure of the highest standards on existing public roads, as funding and site constraints allow.
- **CPO 12.13:** To facilitate the development of pedestrian and cycle linkages through and between new and existing developments to improve permeability and provide shorter, more direct routes to schools, public transport, local services and amenities while ensuring that personal safety, particularly at night time, is of the utmost priority.
- **CPO 12.14:** To facilitate the implementation of local projects which support pedestrian and cyclist permeability, safety and access to schools and public transport.
- **CPO 12.16:** To facilitate and drive the significant improvement of the County's cycle network and strive to implement existing and prepare further, local cycle network plans.
- **CPO 12.19:** To support the development of car parks / set down areas to accommodate Park and Stride initiatives at appropriate locations, especially within walking distance to schools.
- **CPO 12.21:** To promote the development of transport interchanges and 'nodes' where a number of transport types can interchange with ease. In particular:
 - to enhance existing parking facilities at / near and the improvement of bus links to the train stations;
 - to encourage the improvement of bicycle parking facilities at all transport interchanges;
 - to improve existing and provide new footpath / footway linkages to existing / future transport interchange locations;
 - to promote and support the development of fully accessible public transport services and infrastructure, that can be used by all people, regardless of their age, size, disability or ability.

CPO 12.23 relates directly to Wicklow Train Station and seeks “*To ensure the continued and long-term operation of and improvement of the Dublin – Rosslare line... and to ensure that land uses adjacent to former stations are appropriate and can facilitate future improvements*”. Further to this is an identified need “*to require any development proposals in the vicinity of former train stations to be so designed to facilitate future access to the station and to reserve adequate space for future car parking*”, with appreciation of the Proposed Development providing 27no. private vehicle parking spaces (including 3no. electric vehicle bays), 3no. disabled parking spaces and 3no. age friendly parking spaces.

The primary requirement for the Proposed Development is to implement a safe, direct, and high-quality pedestrian and cycle link across the Dublin Rosslare railway line connecting Station Road and the Wicklow PAR, whilst encouraging and facilitating modal shift towards walking and cycling and public transport usage. The Proposed Development will also greatly enhance the permeability of Wicklow Train Station and East Glendalough School, as well as the existing residential and community facilities surrounding the subject site. Specifically, by implementing the following objectives, the Proposed Development will:

- Provide a high-quality pedestrian and cycle link between the Wicklow PAR and Station Road;
- Provide suitable vehicle and bus parking/set down facilities for Wicklow Train Station accessed from the Wicklow PAR;
- Provide infrastructure that will encourage a modal shift to cycling, walking and rail transport;
- Alleviate peak-time congestion in the area by offering a new access point to the amenities along Station Road.

Consequently, the implementation of the Proposed Development can help reduce the high levels of congestion currently experienced at peak times on the R750 regional road and Station Road local road. The Proposed Development would wholly support the aims and objectives outlined above.

7.3.1.8 Climate Change

Progressing climate action is a priority for the CDP. With consideration of the nature of the Proposed Development, the CDP specifies mitigation measures from a Transport perspective, which includes support for the construction of cycle and pedestrian infrastructure, as well as for “*coordinated land-use and transport*”

planning, to reduce the demand for vehicular travel and journey lengths”, under CPO 16.27. Other CPOs in support of the Proposed Development include:

- **CPO 16.28:** To encourage carpooling and facilitate park and ride facilities for public transport.
- **CPO 16.29:** Through sustainable planning and investment in transport infrastructure, to reduce journey times, length, congestion and to increase the attractiveness of public transport.

7.3.1.9 Summary

The Proposed Development is seen to align with the key aims and objectives of the CDP, acting fully in support of its key objectives and policies, whilst being wholly supported by the overarching aims and objectives of the Plan.

7.3.2 Wicklow-Rathnew Development Plan 2013 – 2019

Until such time as the Wicklow-Rathnew Local Area Plan (LAP) is formally adopted (currently at pre-draft stage) the Wicklow Town-Rathnew Development Plan 2013 – 2019 (the Development Plan) remains the pertinent local plan for the area. The purpose of the development plan is “*To provide a blueprint for the sustainable development of the plan area in order to realise its full potential in the interests of the town and county*”.

7.3.2.1 Vision and Core Strategy

Per Chapter 2.1, the Development Plan aims to provide a sustainable and quality environment for all. Key to this, in support of the Proposed Development, is “*Strengthening and consolidating Wicklow Town as the County town...by improving the public realm, by encouraging infill development and brownfield regeneration and by improving movement throughout the town*”.

Another supportive ‘Key Strategic Objective’ is an aim of “*Integrating land use planning and transport planning, with the dual aim of reducing the distance that people need to travel...and facilitating the delivery of improved public transport*”, with a commitment to investment in infrastructure which can generate the highest returns to the community.

The Development Plan emphasises a need for “*Maximisation of the investment made in new and existing transport infrastructure*”, whilst “*The upgrading and provision of footpaths/cycleways is a continuous scheme to ensure ease of pedestrian and cyclist movement throughout the town and environs*”, in support of the deliverables of the Proposed Development.

Chapter 2.2.6 of the Development Plan references the importance of both Wicklow Train Station and the PAR as key infrastructure assets. The principles of land development are presented in Chapter 2.2.7 of the Development Plan, amongst which is the importance of new linkages to existing employment areas / services and educational establishments, through the provision of the best transport infrastructure available. It is reminded that the Proposed Development will provide access and permeability to the PAR (and by extension the Port), as well as East Glendalough School, amongst other services as per Figure 4-2 above.

7.3.2.2 Economic / Social Development

From an economic perspective the Proposed Development is seen to align with the Town’s Economic Strategy, delivering on the Strategic Objective of “*Exploitation and development of existing assets*”, as defined in Chapter 5.2 of the Development Plan, given its location at Wicklow Train Station and connections to the PAR and adjacent school. Furthermore, Chapter 5.3.3 of the Development Plan denotes that “*Adequate infrastructure is vital for the facilitation of future economic development*”, which includes “*effective road and public transport networks*”.

Chapter 8 of the Development Plan focuses on social development and actively seeks to facilitate improved physical access to goods and services, by promoting development that makes facilities and locations easily accessible by public transport, cycling and walking. With consideration of the enhanced permeability provided by the Proposed Development, the Development Plan further supports “*Facilitating an overall improvement in the quality of the built environment*”, to which the proposed landscaping and public lighting will further contribute.

7.3.2.3 Traffic, Transport and Accessibility

Chapter 9 of the Development Plan, in support of the Proposed Development, determines that “*the integration of good land use planning with transportation is a key that can unlock significant improvements in the quality of life*”, furthering that “*Reducing the need to travel long distances by private car, and increasing the use of sustainable and healthy alternatives, can bring multiple benefits to both our environment and communities*”. Overall, the Development Plan aims to promote public transport, cycling and walking and “*Promote the delivery of local*

transport links", whilst improving facilities for pedestrians and access for all. The Proposed Development, therefore, actively aligns with the Town's transport hierarchy.

The Development Plan highlights requirements that WCC should ensure all proposed park and ride facilities, provide the following:

- *Pedestrian and cycle paths connecting the proposed facility to the public transport node it is serving and to the surrounding developments*
- *Environmentally friendly lighting along all pedestrian and cycle paths connecting the facility to the transport node*
- *Adequate set down, waiting and turning areas for feeder buses; and*
- *Bicycle parking facilities.*

In achieving the above, it is reminded that the Proposed Development will include 3no. bus parking spaces, setdown area, 27no. private vehicle parking spaces (including 3no. electric vehicle bays), 3no. disabled parking spaces and 3no. age friendly parking spaces, construction of cycle tracks and footpaths, construction of a pedestrian and cycle bridge and underground secure cycle storage, alongside appropriate public lighting provisions (please refer to Section 8.10 below and Drawing WPAR-ACM-HLG-SW-DR-EO-1001).

There has been an increased emphasis in recent times on public transport as an alternative to the private car; however, while it is noted that there has been significant progress made in the national public transport network, the level of investment in services has not kept pace with the increased levels of population growth, which has contributed to the increase in the car-based commuting to Dublin. While the Development Plan is a land-use, rather than a transport plan, it endeavours to encourage and facilitate the improvement of public transport and supports the provision of infrastructure that can lead to a reduction in private car journeys.

The Proposed Development is supported by / actively aligns with the following Objectives of the Development Plan:

- **CW1:** To enhance the permeability of the settlement through the facilitation and promotion of opportunities for safe pedestrian and cycling linkages to and within the town / village centres, employment areas, schools and public transport nodes that will maximise travel by sustainable modes.
- **CW4:** To facilitate the development of foot and cyclepaths off road, where they will provide greater levels of permeability for these modes, while ensuring that personal safety, particularly at nighttime, is of utmost priority.
- **CW5:** To encourage the provision of secure bicycle parking facilities at strategic locations within the settlement, such as within...Wicklow train station, at community facilities and at transport nodes.
- **PT4:** To ensure that possibilities for the improvement of the Dublin-Rosslare line are maintained and to ensure that land uses adjacent to the station and rail lines are appropriate and will facilitate future improvements.
- **PT5:** To encourage the development of the train station and the surrounding lands / roads as the primary 'transport interchange' where a number of transport types can interchange with ease. In particular:
 - To encourage the improvement of bicycle facilities at the station.
 - To improve existing and provide new footway / cycleway linkages to the train station.
 - To improve linkages between the station and development land to the north of the railway line.

7.3.2.4 Summary

The Proposed Development is seen to directly align with the keys aims and objectives of the Development Plan, acting fully in support of its key objectives and policies and being wholly supported by the overarching aims and objectives of the Plan.

8. Planning Assessment

8.1 Policy Summary

Section 7 of this Report has proven the Proposed Development to be compliant with the overarching planning policies from National to local level, with appropriate design standards implemented throughout as appropriate (please see Section 8.2 below), ensuring the Proposed Development has the ability to assimilate with its adjoining uses and landscape, whilst complimenting them through its provisions and deliverables. The importance of and support for active travel infrastructure is reiterated throughout policy, especially in relation to alternatives to the car within town centres. Similarly, the use of brownfield land for the delivery of development is widely promoted.

The Proposed Development actively contributes to the delivery of both NSO1 and NSO4, as laid out in the NPF (Section 7.1.1 above). The delivery of physical, incentivising active travel infrastructure is wholly supported and actively pursued throughout all levels of policy, with local policy emphasising the need for improved infrastructure within Wicklow Town to ensure its continued success and growth and acknowledging the importance of expanding travel connections to the rail network. Providing opportunity for the greater linkages to the PAR and Port within Wicklow are also supported.

Per the RSES, there are specific objectives to improve sustainable transport and such links to Wicklow Port. Per the CDP, the Council is actively working to secure the development of a high-quality walking and cycling network across the County to prioritise the safety of pedestrians and cyclists. Support for schemes that enhance the pedestrian and cyclist environment and maximise permeability and connectivity for pedestrians and cyclists to create safe, direct and attractive links to key locations is also promoted throughout all levels of policy, with the proposed bridge providing segregation from the road network, and also delivering enhanced landscaping and lighting.

In addition, the principle and design of the Proposed Development has followed a sensitive and rational approach to ensure minimal impacts to any sensitive surrounding areas by designing in line with all the relevant standards and guidance documents. The principle of the Proposed Development is actively supported by the overarching planning framework in the country, region and within Wicklow, with the Proposed Development both acting as and supporting sustainable development, whilst delivering on key goals and strategies.

As detailed above in Section 7.3.1.1, the Proposed Development will actively contribute to five of the ten Strategic County Outcomes identified under the CDP. In delivering a structure that supports and facilitates sustainable mobility and reducing the number of people conducting long distance commutes and increasing opportunities for walking and cycling and using public transport, it further aligns with the 'Sustainable Transport' pursuits of the CDP's overall strategy.

With appreciation of the proximity of East Glendalough School to the Proposed Development, which will see pupil numbers increasing from 360 to 510, Policy at all levels makes reference to the expansion of active travel to increase the number of children walking and cycling to primary and secondary school. The Proposed Development includes for the installation of public lighting and the widening of the existing footpath, aligning with the health and safety requirements defined in policy. Another component of the overall strategy of the CDP is to deliver 'Sustainable Communities', which involves the facilitation of "*improved access to employment, services and amenities...education*", in appreciation of the Proposed Development opening connections to East Glendalough School, the local communities, Wicklow Port and the Station itself.

Ultimately Policy seeks to strengthen walking / cycling accessibility and facilities, whilst facilitating and promoting modal shift to more sustainable transport options, including walking and cycling, ensuring full support for the Proposed Development and confirming the alignment of the Proposed Development with the overarching National to local Policy, whilst showcasing its contribution to the fulfilment of a range of key objectives and policies.

8.2 Policy and Standard Compliance

The Proposed Development has an overall area of 1.34ha which ensures a minimal land take, of which the majority is underutilised brownfield land appropriate for development. It has been designed in line with relevant standards, guidelines, and recommendations, and designed to fit into the existing setting, complimenting the existing structures associated with the Station and wider environs. The width of the two-way cycle track has been

defined as minimum 3m, in accordance with the Cycle Design Manual. Pedestrian facilities provided throughout the site have a minimum width of 2.0m. A width of minimum 3.0m has been provided for a bus stop island area.

The Proposed Development will respond well to its surroundings, assimilating into the existing station infrastructure through its complementary design, scale and materials and tie-in to existing kerb lines, with earthworks, landscaping and an embankment proposed to aid assimilation and visual integration. Providing strong connections to the station, adjacent school, wider environs and the PAR (and by extension the Port) the Proposed Development will provide a key and strategic connection, allowing for access from all sections of the community regardless of their circumstances or ability.

Through use of mainly underutilised brownfield land the Proposed Development is also seen to be a highly efficient form of development, creating a high-quality addition to the public realm, providing safe access away from the road and enhancing permeability across an existing physical barrier at a key location. Safety will be further strengthened through the provision of safety barriers between the footpaths and railway line, with waterproofed tactile surfaces and corduroy hazard paving to be laid to prevent slippages. Combined, these considerations actively demonstrate how the Proposed Development addresses the key principles of design as identified in Chapter 1.1 of Appendix 1 (Development Design Standards) of the CDP.

With 27no. parking spaces proposed, including 3no. disabled bays and 3no. age friendly parking spaces, the proposals exceed the requirement of 10% of parking spaces to be as such, as defined by the standards of the CDP (Chapter 2.1.7). The underground bike parking facility is in compliance with the requirements for 'Public Transport pick up points/interchanges' as defined in Table 2.4 of Appendix 1 of the CDP and provides for appropriately covered facilities in line with Chapter 2.1.8 of the CDP's standards.

The proposed set down area and 27no. private car parking spaces have been designed in accordance with the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DMURS). Kerb build-outs have been provided to separate each bank of parking. The disabled parking spaces have been designed with reference to Figure 1.3 of 'Building for Everyone: A Universal Design Approach', with a standard width of 2.4m, adjacent 1.2m safety zone and 4.8m depth, again with a 1.2m safety zone.

Chapter 2.1.3 of Appendix 1 of the CDP requires the following for development at / connecting to Park and Ride facilities:

- Pedestrian and cycle paths connecting the proposed facility to the public transport node it is serving and to the surrounding developments;
- Environmentally friendly lighting along all pedestrian and cycle paths connecting the facility to the transport node;
- Adequate set down, waiting and turning areas for feeder buses etc;
- Covered Bicycle parking facilities;
- Adequate shelter for users, where appropriate.

An underground Bike Parking Facility will accommodate cyclist parking, with access via the two proposed lift structures and the proposed ramp structure. Cyclists and pedestrians are to be segregated on a two-way cycle track of 3m and footpath of 2.5m. The existing footpath width has been increased to 3m in areas of significant pedestrian footfall, particularly in proximity of the bus parking. Soft landscaping, environmentally friendly public lighting, as showcased in Drawings WPAR-ACM-HGN-SW-DR-CH-1000 and WPAR-ACM-HLG-SW-DR-EO-1001 respectively], will also be provided. Landscaping shall be provided to soften the appearance of hard surfaced areas associated with the carparking and set down areas, in line with the requirement of Chapter 2.1.7 of Appendix 1 of the CDP, given they would be in view of the general public, as shown in Drawing WPAR-ACM-HGN-SW-DR-CH-1000.

The proposed arrangement has been designed with the provision of a set down area, with a layout parallel to the footpath on the south side of the parking area. This layout optimises road safety by ensuring adequate access straight in and out of the bus bays. The proposed bridge follows the most direct route available between its two connection points, as per the requirements of Chapter 2.1.5 of Appendix 1 of the CDP.

In line with the concept of 'Access for All', the Proposed Development is pedestrian, cyclist and wheelchair accessible. The Proposed Development actively contributes to the concept of 'Healthy Placemaking', aiding the creation of an environment that supports physical activity and encourages people to make healthy choices and live healthier lives within Wicklow-Rathnew, delivering compact growth that facilitates and encourages active

travel including walking and cycling, aligning with the overall strategy of the CDP. The Proposed Development has been designed in accordance with both the Traffic Management Guidelines and the Cycle Design Manual.

The Proposed Development will not contribute to flooding on the subject site or the surrounding area as surface run-off will be collected via a network of gullies and sub-surface carrier pipes which will convey flows to a geocellular attenuation tank located along the north side of the car park. The attenuated run-off will discharge into the existing nearby existing drainage network on the Wicklow Port Access Road, complying with the drainage requirements identified under Chapter 2.2 of Appendix 1 of the CDP, as identified in Drawing WPAR-ACM-HGN-SW-DR-CH-2001.

8.3 Land Use Zoning

Per Chapter 3.5 of the CDP, zoning designations within Wicklow are determined by the local plans for each settlement. Until such time as the Wicklow-Rathnew Local Area Plan (LAP) is formally adopted (currently at pre-draft stage) the Wicklow Town-Rathnew Development Plan 2013 – 2019 remains the pertinent local plan for the areas.

Under the provisions of the Development Plan's 'Land Use Zoning Objectives Map⁷' the roadway aspects of subject site are determined to consist of unzoned land, however the subject site does contain two designated zoning provisions, one on either side of the railway line, as per Figure 8-1 below.

On the northern side of the railway line, the Proposed Development lies within lands zoned as:

- **E & E – Warehousing (E2):** To facilitate the further development and improvement of existing employment areas and to facilitate the development of new high-quality light industrial, warehousing and logistics developments / units.

On the southern side of the railway line, the Proposed Development lies within lands zoned as:

- **Community / Education / Institutional (CE):** To facilitate the development of necessary community, health, religious, educational, social and civic infrastructure.

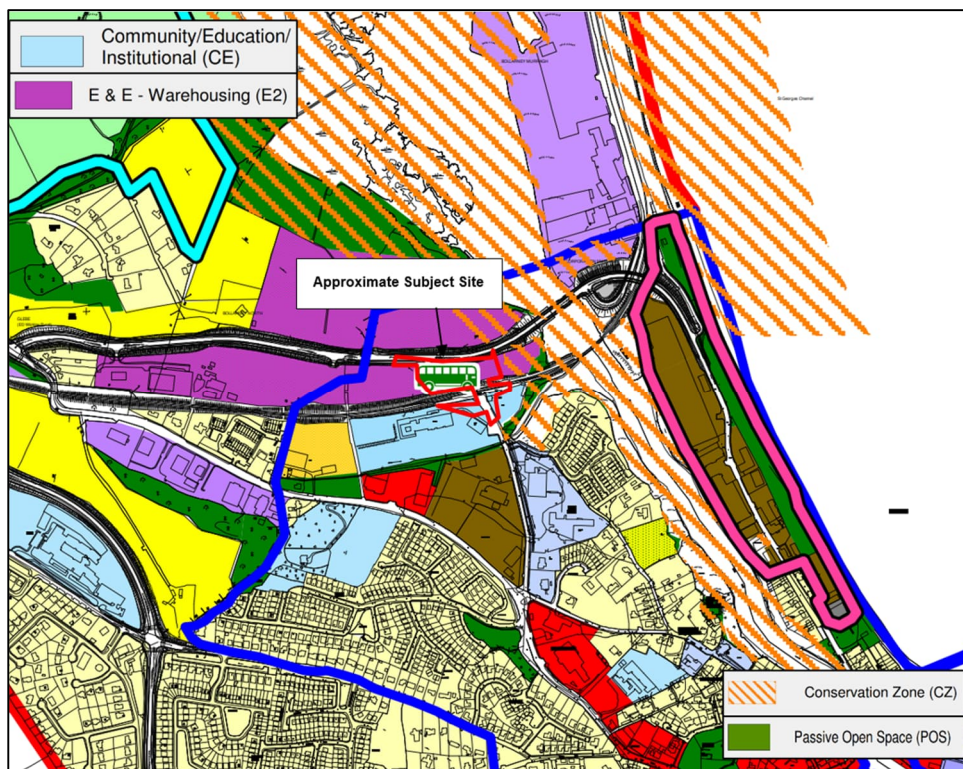


Figure 8-1: Land-Use Zoning Provisions of Subject Site⁸

Table 13.2 of the Development Plan sets out the 'Typically Permitted Uses' for each zoning. It is noted that the nature of the Proposed Development is not contained within the Typically Permitted Uses of either zoning, nor

⁷ [Layout \(wicklow.ie\)](http://www.wicklow.ie)

⁸ Extract from Wicklow-Rathnew Development Plan's Land Use Zoning Objectives Map – Annotations Added

however is it contained in either of the 'Typically Not Permitted' categories. Per Chapter 13 of the Development Plan, the Proposed Development is thus considered to fall under 'Other Uses' which "*will be considered in relation to the general policies of the plan and the zoning description and objective of the particular area*". Section 7.3.2 above has demonstrated the proposals compliance with the Development Plan and its policies (which actively support the Proposed Development). Furthermore, with the nature of zonings considered, the Proposed Development represents key infrastructure that will facilitate improved access, as well as providing necessary social and civic infrastructure that improves permeability and transport options for the local and wider community.

It is also evident that the implementation of the Proposed Development, will provide a new link to lands with a zoning objective (EE) that specifically aims to provide for enterprise and employment development in the form of light industry, warehousing, and logistics development. The connection to these lands with Wicklow Port and to Wicklow town centre, along with the proximity to Wicklow Train Station is considered to be a benefit in attracting future enterprise and employment opportunities. The Proposed Development is therefore considered compliant with the present land-use zonings.

It is noted, as visible in Figure 8-1 above, that the subject site also directly borders two additional zonings, namely:

- **Conservation Zone (CZ):** To protect these highly sensitive and scenic locations from inappropriate development, reinforce their character, distinctiveness and sense of place, and better manage current access and amenity uses.
- **Passive Open Space (POS):** To facilitate the further development and improvement of existing parks and other passive / amenity open areas and to facilitate opportunities for the development of new parks, recreational spaces, green corridors and ecological buffers.

Similar to above, the POS zoning sees the Proposed Development identified as 'Other Uses', with the same principle applied. For CZ zoning it is noted that "*Any application shall be accompanied by the appropriate type of environmental assessment*". It is noted that Appropriate Assessment (AA) and Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Screenings accompany this application, with summaries provided in Sections 9.1 and 9.2, respectively, below.

Given the compliance with Policy, as defined in Section 7 above, sustainable design, objectives and deliverables and the lack of environmental impact determined in accompanying reports, the Proposed Development is seen to be sustainable development that will enhance and compliment Wicklow Town and its functions. Given the cycling and walking nature and links created, the Proposed Development is further seen to compliment the zoning designations within and adjacent the subject site. From a land-use zoning perspective, therefore, the Proposed Development is considered acceptable and compliant.

8.4 Natural Heritage

EPA's online mapping tools were assessed to identify any protected sites at or within proximity to the subject site, i.e., Special Areas of Conservation (SAC), Special Protection Areas (SPA), Natural Heritage Areas (NHA) and proposed NHAs (pNHA), with further study undertaken to identify any Nature Reserves or Ramsar sites in proximity.

The subject site itself does not include any environmental designations. Situated c.30m south-east of the subject site The Murrough SPA (004186) is the closest such site, with The Murrough Wetlands SAC (002249) and The Murrough pNHA (000730) both sited approximately 150m north-east of the subject site, all associated with the River Vartry.

Other Protected Areas within a 15km radius are presented below in Table 8-1, with the visual context of the Protected Areas in relation to the subject site shown below in Figure 8-2. An Appropriate Assessment (AA) Screening accompanies this application, in compliance with CPO 17.6 of the CDP and Part XAB of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, to assess any potential impact on protected sites.

Table 8-1: Protected Areas Within a 15km Radius

Site Code	Site Name	Distance from Proposed Development
SACs		
002249	The Murrough Wetlands	c.160m north-east
002274	Wicklow Reef SAC	c.3.9km east
001766	Magherabeg Dunes	c.6.4km south-east

Site Code	Site Name	Distance from Proposed Development
000729	Buckroney-Brittis Dunes and Fen	c.10km south
000717	Deputy's Pass Nature Reserve	c.8km south-west
000733	Vale of Clara	c.11km west
000716	Carriggower Bog	c.14.6km north-west
SPAs		
004186	The Murrough	c.45m south-east
004127	Wicklow Head	c.2.5km south-east
pNHAs		
000730	The Murrough	c.160m north-east
000734	Wicklow Head	c.2.7km south-east
001766	Magherabeg Dunes	c.6.9km south-east
000729	Buckroney-Brittis Dunes and Fens	c.9.7km south
001756	Glenealy Woods	c.5km south-west
000733	Vale of Clara	c.11km west
000718	Devil's Glen	c.7km north-west
001771	Vartry Reservoir	c.11.6km north-west
000716	Carriggower Bog	c.14.6km north-west
Nature Reserves		
N/A	Deputy's Pass	c.7.8km south-west
N/A	Vale of Clara	c.11km west

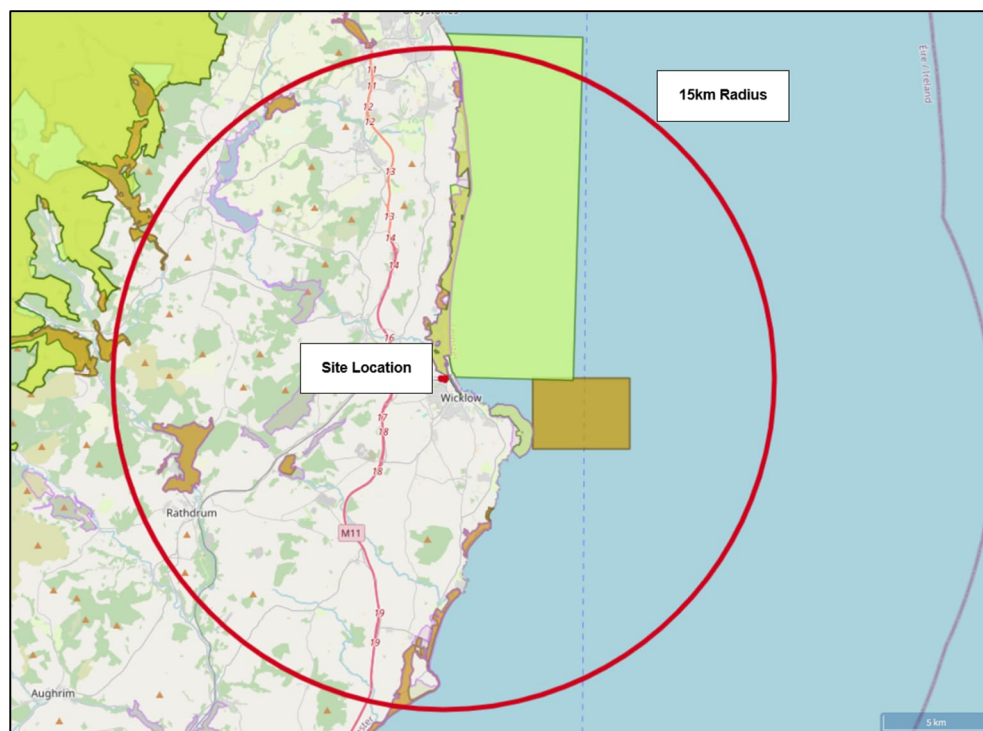


Figure 8-2: Protected Sites Within a 15km Radius⁹

European sites are relevant where there may be a source-pathway-receptor relationship which may give rise to likely significant effects on the site or its qualifying features. The European sites identified as relevant are based

⁹ Extract from EPA Mapping [EPA Maps](#) – Annotations Added

on proximity and factors such as air quality, hydrological connectivity, or the potential connection to the Site due to mobile selection features that may be associated with the habitats within the potential Zone of Interest (Zoi) of the Proposed Development. As defined in the accompanying AA Screening, “*European sites that fall within the Zoi of the Proposed Development are considered to comprise those that are in proximity, have QI/SCI species which may be present outside their European site boundary, and/or are hydrologically connected to the site and therefore have a potential source-pathway-receptor relationship*”. Based on this selection criteria, four European sites are located within the Zoi of the Proposed Development: The Murrrough Wetlands SAC, the Murrrough SPA, Wicklow Head SPA and Wicklow Reef SAC.

As identified within the AA Screening “*The Proposed Development is not connected with or necessary to the management of any European sites, and no land take from any European site is required. There will be no works within the European sites, either to facilitate construction or during operation, therefore there will be no transport, resource, or excavation requirements within the European sites*”.

8.5 Architectural, Archaeological and Cultural Heritage

The CDP sets out the following objectives in relation to built heritage:

- **CPO 8.1:** To secure the preservation of all archaeological monuments included in the Record of Monuments and Places as established under Section 12 of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act, 1994, and of sites, features and objects of archaeological interest generally.
- **CPO 8.2:** No development in the vicinity of a feature included in the Record of Monuments & Places (RMP) or any other site of archaeological interest will be permitted which seriously detracts from the setting of the feature or which is seriously injurious to its cultural or educational value.
- **CPO 8.3:** Any development that may, due to its size, location or nature, have implications for archaeological heritage (including both sites and areas of archaeological potential / significance as identified in Schedules 08.01 & 08.02 and Maps 8.01 & 8.02 of this plan) shall be subject to an archaeological assessment.
- **CPO 8.10:** To protect, conserve and manage the built heritage of Wicklow and to encourage sensitive and sustainable development to ensure its preservation for future generations.
- **CPO 8.13:** To ensure the protection of all structures, items and features contained in the Record of Protected Structures.
- **CPO 8.15:** All development works on or at the sites of protected structures, including any site works necessary, shall be carried out using best heritage practice for the protection and preservation of those aspects or features of the structures / site that render it worthy of protection.

A desktop review of the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage’s Historic Environment Interactive Map Viewer¹⁰ was undertaken. As presented in Figure 8-3 below, no Recorded Monuments (RMPs) were identified in proximity to the subject site, with the closest (WI025-0909) located c.350m north of the subject site’s northern boundary, on the opposite side of the R999. With regards Protected Structures, whilst not visible in Figure 8-3 below, components of the Wicklow Railway Station are recorded as a Protected Structure of the CDP. These components are the main railway station building, the waiting room on platform No. 1 and the signal cabin which are all covered by the designation WTC-RPS 25.

¹⁰ [ArcGIS Web Application](#)

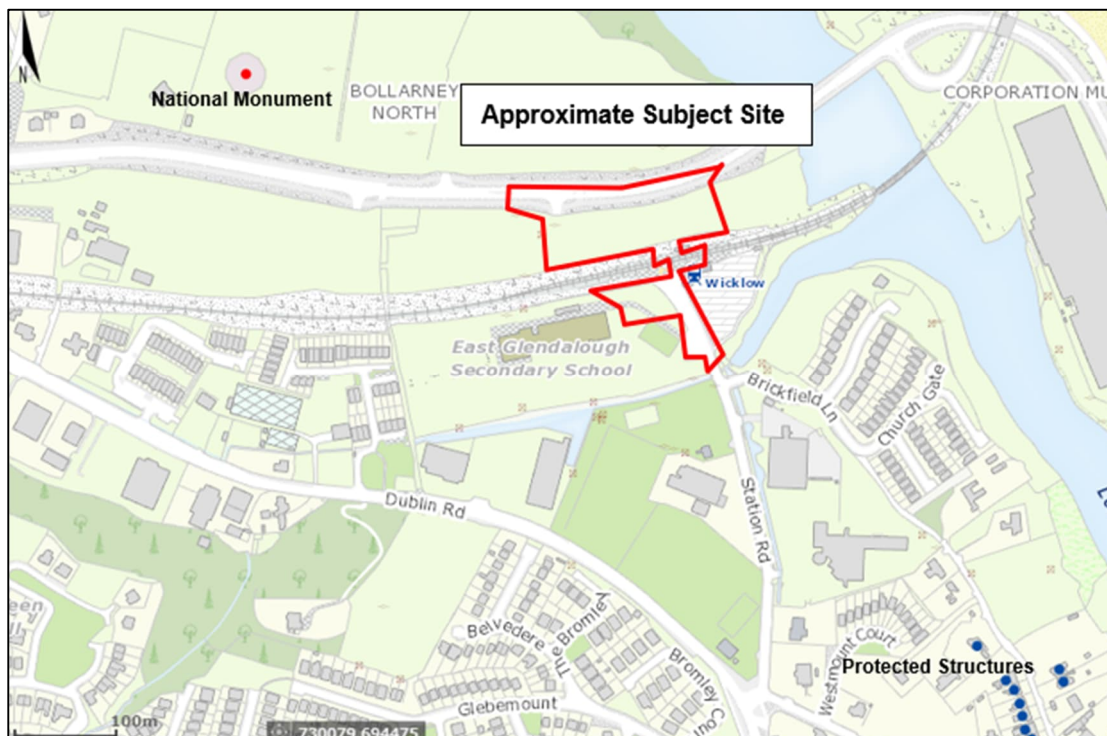


Figure 8-3: Built Heritage Features in Proximity to Subject Site¹¹

There are no National Monuments within the subject site, nor does it form part of an Architectural Conservation Area (ACA). There are no buildings recorded on the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH) Building Survey and no gardens or designated landscapes recorded on the NIAH Gardens Survey, located within or in proximity to the subject site.

In fulfilling the requirements of CPO 8.3 and CPO 8.4, given the scale of the Proposed Development and the fact there will be a loss of space directly outside the building due to the access stairs and the new boundary wall which will replace the current boundary wall, an Architectural Heritage Assessment Report was undertaken and prepared by AECOM, a copy of which accompanies this application, formed using the guidance set out in the document 'Architectural Heritage Protection: Guidelines for Planning Authorities' (DAHG 2011). As this application relates to the construction of new structures within the curtilage of the Protected Structure, the assessment concentrates on the relationship between the structure and its setting, and the merits of, and impacts on, existing structures and features in the curtilage.

Per the Heritage Assessment Report, the addition of the bridge will render the current footbridge obsolete although it will be retained. The station boundary will require realignment with the existing boundary wall removed. The Proposed Development will require the realignment of the current southern boundary of the station. This consists of a coursed rubble masonry wall which extends between the northwest corner of the porch on the main station building and the signal box. The wall also appears to form the base supporting the signal box although this section will be left in-situ. "The boundary wall is not included within the Protected Structure WTC-RPS 25 and while it does have historical value as part of the redevelopment of Wicklow Station when the track was doubled, its removal will not reduce the group value of the station building, signal box and waiting room". In consideration of these alterations and additions, it is highlighted that CPO 8.14 of the CDP aims "To positively consider proposals to alter or change the use of protected structures so as to render them viable for modern use subject to architectural heritage assessment and to demonstration by a suitably qualified Conservation Architect / or other relevant expertise that the structure, character, appearance and setting will not be adversely affected and suitable design, materials and construction methods will be utilised", as is the proven case.

The realigned wall will screen views of the station building from the west although this façade will still be visible from the southwest. This façade is also not the primary aspect of the structure which is the north elevation fronting onto the platform. The wall will not be visible from the eastern extent of the platform and will not reduce the group value of the station building, signal box and waiting room.

¹¹ Extract From Historic Environment Viewer Mapping – Annotations Added

Furthermore, it is noted that the Heritage Officer with Wicklow County Council was consulted on the Proposed Development. This consultation determined that the Proposed Development was acceptable in principle from a built heritage standpoint, especially as the existing signal cabin, footbridge and waiting room are to be retained, with the accompanying Assessment Report refined to reflect comments from the Heritage Officer. Ultimately no concerns or negative impacts are expected to occur with regards to built heritage.

8.6 Flood Risk Identification and Drainage

The Office of Public Works (OPW) Flood Hazard Maps Website¹² provides available historical and anecdotal information on any flooding incidences or occurrences in the vicinity of the Proposed Development. A desktop review of the OPW national flood information portal was undertaken to ascertain whether there is a risk of flooding and, if so, to qualitatively assess the level of risk. A review of the CDP's Strategic Flood Risk Assessment¹³ (SFRA) and its associated maps, as well as the SFRA¹⁴ of the Wicklow-Rathnew Development Plan were further reviewed to determine which 'Flood Zones' the Proposed Development falls within, to help qualitatively assess any flood risk potential.

The Flood Maps confirmed that the subject site has not been subject to any past flooding, nor have any past flooding events been recorded within the subject site's surrounding environs, with the closest event located c.500m west. No instances of river, coastal, or groundwater flooding / surface water extents were identified within the boundary of the Proposed Development, however 'High-Probability' river and coastal flood extents, associated with the River Vartry / Broad Lough Estuary are located immediately south of the subject site and within 100m to the east as per the blue and green shadings respectively in Figure 8-4 below.

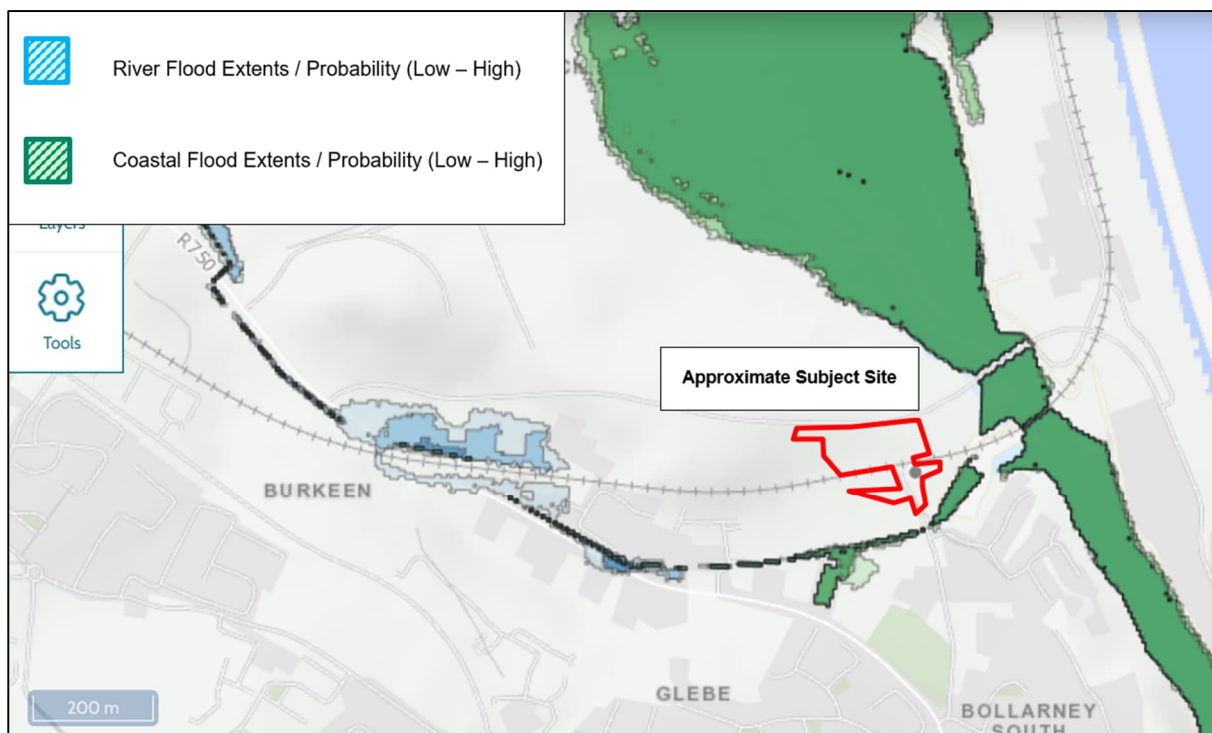


Figure 8-4: River Flood Extents at Subject Site¹⁵

An extract from Map 4 'Bollarny' of the Development Plan's SFRA is presented below in Figure 8-5, confirming the entirety of the subject site to be located within the lower risk Flood Zone C. It is noted, however, that areas of Flood Zone A and B are located approximately 45m south of the subject site.

Per the SFRA, the Flood Zones are defined as follows:

- **Flood Zone A:** includes lands where the probability of flooding from rivers and the sea is highest (greater than 1% or 1 in 100 for river flooding, or 0.5% or 1 in 200 for coastal flooding).

¹² [Flood Maps - Floodinfo.ie](https://www.floodinfo.ie)

¹³ [Appendix 8 - Strategic Flood Risk Assessment.pdf \(wicklow.ie\)](#)

¹⁴ [Microsoft Word - Flood Risk Assessment WickRath2013-2019.doc \(wicklow.ie\)](#)

¹⁵ Extract from [Flood Maps - Floodinfo.ie](https://www.floodinfo.ie) – Annotation Added

- **Flood Zone B:** includes lands where the probability of flooding from rivers and the sea is moderate (between 0.1% or 1 in 1000 and 1% or 1 in 100 for river flooding and between 0.1% or 1 in 1000 year and 0.5% or 1 in 200 for coastal flooding).
- **Flood Zone C:** where the probability of flooding from rivers and the sea is low (less than 0.1% or 1 in 1000 for both river and coastal flooding). Flood Zone C covers all areas of the plan which are not in zones A or B. (i.e. flood zones are only coloured for A and B zones with C uncoloured).

Per Table 1-6 of the CDP's SFRA, all forms of development are considered 'Appropriate' for placement within Flood Zone C, negating any requirement for a justification test to be undertaken.

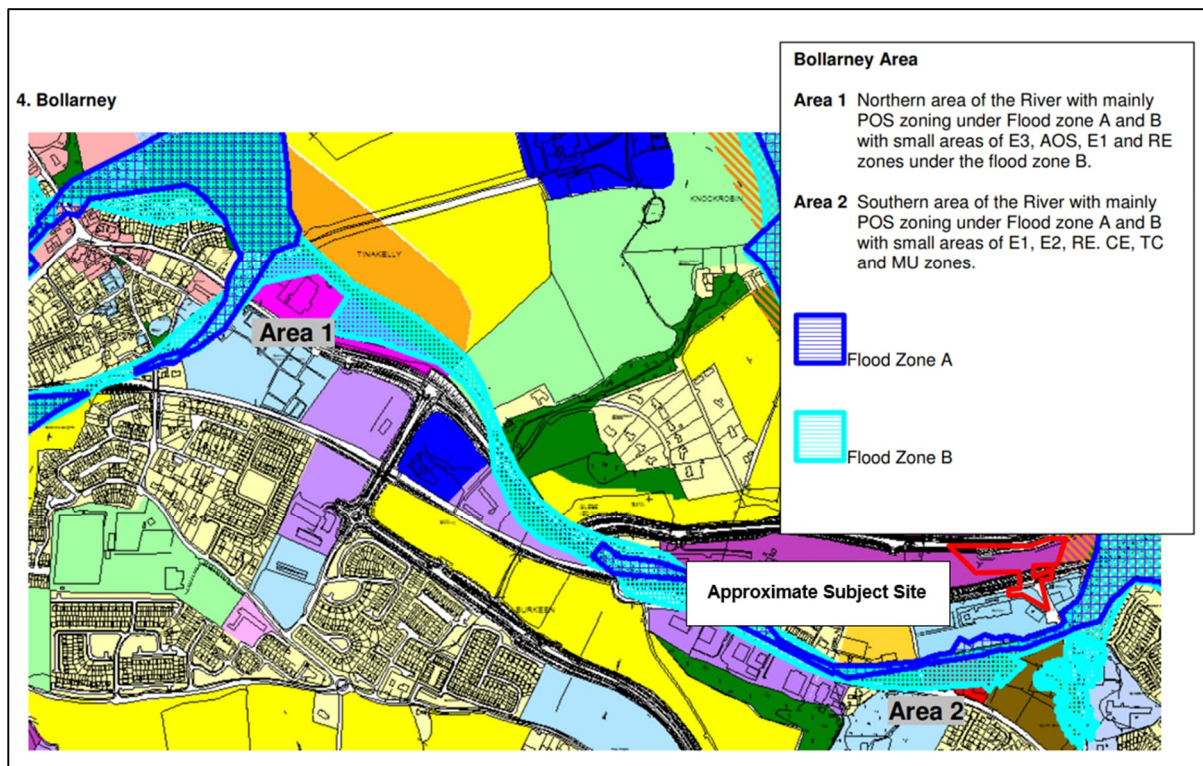


Figure 8-5: Flood Zones at Subject Site¹⁶

The Proposed Development will not contribute to flooding on the subject site or the surrounding area as surface run-off will be collected via a network of gullies and sub-surface carrier pipes which will convey flows to a geocellular attenuation tank located along the northern boundary of the proposed car park, with a 20% climate change uplift considered. The attenuated run-off will discharge into the nearby existing drainage network on the Wicklow Port Access Road. Drainage design also includes the inclusion of an area for the potential implementation of Sustainable Urban Drainage systems (SUDs) where appropriate, in compliance with CPO 14.13 of the CDP which has a requirement to "Ensure the implementation of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) in accordance with the Wicklow County Council SuDS Policy to ensure surface water runoff is managed for maximum benefit". In addition, a hydrobrake, 225mm filter drain and 450mm diameter culvert will be provided, alongside a petrol interceptor. The Proposed Development will connect to the existing surface water sewer, existing road drainage network and existing interceptor ditch. The proposed bridge's deck drainage system is to be incorporated into the bridge superstructure. The layout and location of drainage infrastructure is presented in Drawing WPAR-ACM-HGN-SW-DR-CH-2001.

The proposed infiltration of surface water on the Proposed Development shall be designed and managed to prevent increased groundwater flows downslope during the construction phase and during its service life. The proposed parking / set down facilities will be drained from west to east and then south to north to ensure water flows are directed away from the existing cut slope. This will then be connected to the existing drainage network on Port Access Road via a manhole and will be subject to standard water treatment before discharge. Canopy structures will be provided to the front of the lift structures and over the length of the station access stairs. Downpipes will be provided to both stair and lift structures and directional falls incorporated over the canopies and roof slabs to prevent the freefall of water from the structures. Downpipes will be installed in the most

¹⁶ Extract from Map 14 of the Wicklow-Rathnew Development Plan SFRA – Annotation Added

inconspicuous location to minimise impact on aesthetics. The floor of the lift shell will have a slope of 1 in 50 to direct any water that has gathered in the pit into a drainage sump. The petrol interceptor is proposed at the north-east corner of the car park and set-down area as part of these works immediately upstream of the geocellular attenuation tank. This will capture any hydrocarbon spills within the proposed car park and set-down area.

Per accompanying environmental reports, the Proposed Development is not located within areas susceptible to experience fluvial, pluvial, or groundwater flooding, either at present or in future scenarios, or areas which have experienced past flood events. Areas prone to flooding in proximity are at a lower elevation compared to the subject site. Floods, therefore, are unlikely to cause a significant environmental problem for the Proposed Development. In addition, surface runoff will be managed through the proposed drainage design and so no significant increase in the risk of flooding in nearby lands is likely to occur as a result of the Proposed Development.

8.7 Views and Landscape

Table 17.1 of the CDP confirms that all towns ranging from Levels 1 – 6 of the Wicklow Settlement Hierarchy are considered to be ‘Urban Areas’ with Wicklow-Rathnew a level 2 settlement on the hierarchy. In terms of landscape classification, these settlements have already been deemed suitable for development and the impacts on the wider landscape of such development has already been deemed acceptable. It is, therefore, unnecessary for developments in urban areas to have regard to the surrounding landscape classification or to carry out landscape or visual impact assessment, as confirmed in Chapter 17.3 of the CDP. Map 17.10A of the CDP also confirms an absence of any protected views to, from or across the subject site.

Aesthetic considerations have informed the design of the proposed bridge, including the selection of materials, finishes and shape of the bridge elements, to ensure its presence during the operational phase does not result in any significant impacts on the landscape.

8.8 Biodiversity, Ecology and Natural Systems

The following Policies / Development Objectives are of relevance from a biodiversity and ecological perspective:

- **CPO 17.1:** To protect, sustainably manage and enhance the natural heritage, biodiversity, geological heritage, landscape and environment of County Wicklow in recognition of its importance for nature conservation and biodiversity and as a non-renewable resource.
- **CPO 17.2:** Ensure the protection of ecosystems and ecosystem services by integrating full consideration of these into all decision making.
- **CPO 17.14:** Ensure that development proposals support the protection and enhancement of biodiversity and ecological connectivity within the plan area in accordance with Article 10 of the Habitats Directive, including linear landscape features, woodlands, trees, hedgerows, road and railway margins, semi-natural grasslands, natural springs, wetlands, stonewalls, geological and geo-morphological systems.
- **CPO 17.6:** 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.

As confirmed in Section 8.4 above, an AA Screening accompanies this application package, in compliance with the requirements of CPO 17.6. The summarised conclusion of this Screening is set out in Section 9.1 below. In consideration of CPO 17.1 and CPO 17.2 the AA Screening conducted an analysis of potential impact on biodiversity / ecosystems within the four identified Protected Areas relevant to the subject site.

With regards the Murrough SPA, “*due to the scale and nature of the works, the attenuation of sound in air, and the existing urban/suburban nature of the surrounding area, no significant effects are likely to occur*”. Likewise, any potential addition to air or waterborne pollution is highly unlikely. There are no fauna QI species within the Murrough Wetlands SAC and so a similar lack of impact is expected.

Wicklow Head SPA is located approximately 2.5 km south-east of the Site and is designated for kittiwake. This is a marine and intertidal species that nests on clifftops and rock ledges, and therefore is not anticipated to be present within the Site, neither nesting nor present opportunistically. Wicklow Head SPA is too remote to elicit disturbance impacts to kittiwake within the SPA. Wicklow Reef SAC is approximately 4.2 km south-east of the Site and is designated for reef habitat, with the AA Screening determining no potential for impact.

There is, therefore, no possibility for disturbance impacts during construction of operation on any of the protected areas.

Whilst the Proposed Development will require the permanent loss of approximately 5,500m² of green space (including 3,900m² of greenfield land) and a total of 212m of treelines/scrub, including 13no. trees, the accompanying screening determine that *“Taking into consideration the size of the works, the land use zoning designation, and the implementation of the Contractor’s CEMP, no significant impacts on biodiversity due to habitat loss during the construction phase are likely to occur”*. Clearing or felling of vegetation will be carried out outside of the bird breeding season and a suitably qualified and experienced ecologist will carry out checks for birds immediately prior to these activities. Targeted ecological field searches will be carried out by a suitably qualified and experienced ecologist to check for protected and/or notable habitats and species which may be impacted by construction works, and suitable and proportionate mitigation measures will be implemented to avoid or reduce these impacts.

Should invasive species be identified onsite, an Invasive Species Management Plan (ISMP) will be prepared prior to the commencement of the construction works in compliance with CPO 17.17 of the CDP.

8.9 Access and Movement

CPO 12.10 denotes the requirement for Route and Site Selection processes / reports for new transport infrastructure developments, not identified in the CDP. As referenced in Section 2 above the layout, arrangement and components of the Proposed Development were determined following a robust analysis of three proposed Options. This analysis determined that the Proposed Development was most appropriate, with the structural design most technically achievable at the proposed location as well as presenting the least impact on the environment and requiring the lowest amount of land take.

CPO 12.31 of the CDP determines that *“Road Safety Audits, Road Safety Impact Assessments, Street Design Audits as per DMURS, or Accessibility Audits shall be required at the discretion of the Planning Authority but shall generally be required where new road construction or a permanent change to the existing road / street layout is proposed”*. In recognition of this AECOM prepared a Road Safety Audit (RSA). The RSA related to the proposed works at Station Road and the R999 and was carried out in accordance with Transport Infrastructure Ireland Road Safety Audit Guidelines GE-STY-01027 (Dec 2017) and Standard GE-STY-01024 (Dec 2017). The RSA assessed all safety implications for all road users.

CPO 12.57 of the CDP denotes that *“Provision shall be made in all new / expanded developments for Age Friendly and Disabled parking at a suitable and convenient location for users”*, with 3no. disabled spaces and 3no. age friendly spaces to be provided as part of the Proposed Development, directly adjacent the proposed footpath / cycle track.

Operational activities are likely to be very minor in nature and, in addition to use by commuters, will involve infrequent visits by small numbers of personnel to conduct operational and maintenance activities. The Proposed Development allows for pedestrian and cycle use only. The new car parking/set-down area will allow for vehicle access, but use of this area will be purely for parking/set-down by a limited number of vehicles.

Due to the width of the proposed bridge, safety bollards are proposed at the entrance of the bridge from the set-down area on the north and at the bottom of the southern ramp at Station Road to ensure no motorised vehicles can gain access to the bridge or ramp structure. The scheme has considered the impact on visually impaired users with thought given to two-tone surfacing on the ramps, bridge decks and footway/cycle tracks. This gives the impression of a separated cycle track and footway without the need for a permanent central barrier.

Segregation ensures that cyclists are protected from motorised traffic as well as independent of vehicular congestion, thus improving cyclist safety and reliability of journey times for cyclists. The cycle facilities connecting the Proposed Development to the Wicklow PAR are designed as a 3.0m wide offline cycle track. This central width is the desirable minimum width in accordance with Table 2.2 -Width Calculator of the Cycle Design Manual. This width will also ensure continuity with the proposed cycle track width across the Wicklow PAR Link bridge (3.0m wide) and the existing cycleway along Wicklow Port Access Road (3.0m wide).

All roadside signage will be designed with regard to the guidance provided in the Traffic Signs Manual with reference to the design, siting and structural requirements, as per the requirements of CPO 12.67 of the CDP. Reduced congestion on Station Road due to the proposed drop off and set down areas and the addition of bus spaces will also reduce the risk of accidents during peak times. The bridge pedestrian parapets, 1.8m in height, will stop users from falling over the barriers onto the railway lines or falling from a height. A 1.4m high parapet will

also be provided on the southern ramp along the cycle track to protect cyclists from falling from a height. The parapet design which also include privacy details to protect views into the staff and pupils of the East Glendalough School. Figure 8-6 below shows how the entrance to the set-down area and the main circulatory road were designed to accommodate the movement of large vehicles such as buses and coaches. The swept path analysis shows one-way access of a coach vehicle in and out of the set-down area through Port Access Road and the functionality of the saw tooth arrangement which ensures adequate access straight in and out of the bus bays. More detail is shown in the accompanying drawings of the planning application package, namely Drawing WPAR-ACM-HGN-SW-DR-CH-1007.

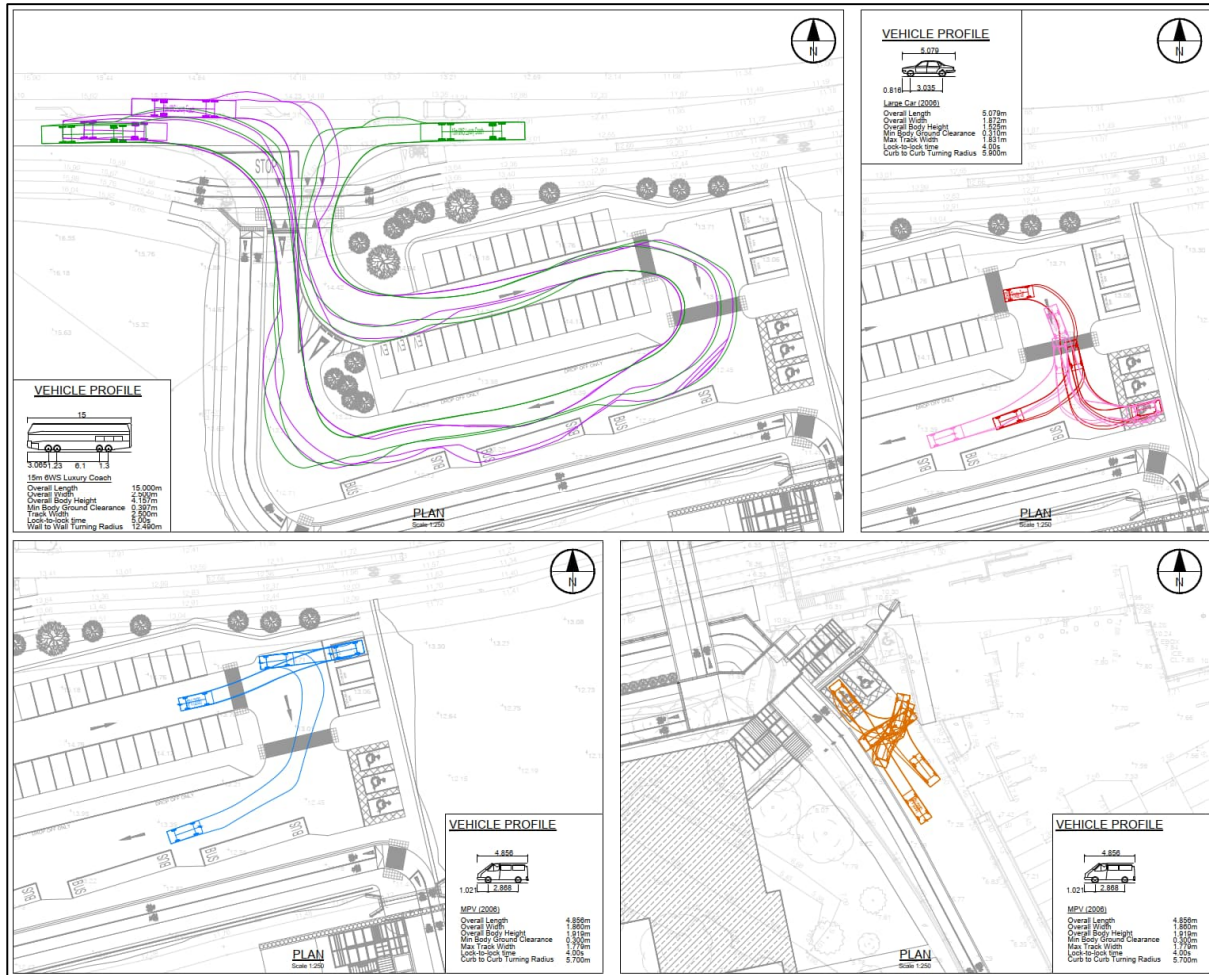


Figure 8-6: Swept Path Analysis – Proposed Carpark and Setdown Area¹⁷

In addition, a Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP) will also be prepared as part and form a sub-plan of the Contractor's CEMP and agreed with WCC. The CTMP will adhere to relevant guidelines and requirements, such as the Department of Transport's 'Traffic Signs Manual Chapter 8: Temporary Traffic Measures and Sign Roadworks' (2019) and Safety, Health & Welfare at Work legislation including the 2005 Act, the Safety, Health, and Welfare (Construction) Regulations 2013, and any amendment to them (the Construction Regulations).

8.10 Lighting

The following objectives of the CDP are of relevance to lighting:

- **CPO 15.17:** To ensure that all external lighting whether free standing or attached to a building shall be designed and constructed so as not to cause excessive light spillage, glare, or dazzle motorists, and thereby limiting light pollution into the surrounding environment and protecting the amenities of nearby properties, traffic and wildlife.

¹⁷ Extract from Drawing WPAR-ACM-HGN-SW-DR-CH-1007

- **CPO 15.18:** To require proposals for new developments with the potential to create light pollution or light impacts on adjacent residences to mitigate impacts, in accordance with the Development & Design Standards set out in this plan.
- **CPO 15.19:** To promote the use of low energy LED (or equivalent) lighting.
- **CPO 15.20:** To require the design and implementation of a hierarchy of light intensity zones in development schemes to ensure that environmental impact is minimised as far as possible particularly in areas proximate to ecological corridors

Lighting will be a mix of Luminaire A, through to Luminaire G, with a total of 139 light installations across the site. Lamps will vary, as per drawing WPAR-ACM-HLG-SW-DR-EO-3001 submitted with the application package and will consist of a klm lamp flux between 0.97 and 10.76. The layout of the proposed lighting is set out in Drawing WPAR-ACM-HLG-SW-DR-EO-1001.

The proposed lighting has been designed in accordance with Wicklow County Council Guidelines for Public Lighting Works 2017 as well as EN standards. The lighting associated with the Proposed Development comprises designs for four functionally different areas.

1. Carpark and Set-down Area

Comprising LED lanterns installed onto 5m columns and designed in accordance with Table 05 of Iarnród Éireann's (IÉ) Lighting Design Guidance Summary Document (November 2019). The design is cognisant of requirement to maintain separation distances from overhead lines.

2. IÉ Platforms

Comprising LED lanterns installed onto 5m columns and designed in accordance with Table 01 of IÉ's Lighting Design Guidance Summary Document (November 2019). The design of the platform lighting utilises approximate existing locations of lighting.

3. Pedestrian and Cycle Bridge and Approach Ramp

Comprising a bespoke, illuminated handrail system with grade 316 stainless steel, aluminium, and GRP options. This design uses asymmetric light distribution and will require very little maintenance, designed in accordance with Table 07 of IÉ's Lighting Design Guidance Summary Document (November 2019).

4. Feature Lighting

Comprising recessed linear LED treatment to provide visual interest and supplementary illumination at the locations where the bridges create a semi-enclosed space/underpass. Illumination levels in the order of 20 Lux are proposed.

Given the location of the Proposed Development within an urban setting and the scale of the works proposed, no significant effects on the local population or sensitive ecological receptors are likely as a result of the proposed additional lighting introduced by the Proposed Development.

8.11 Construction and Waste Management

In line with the requirements of CPO 15.1 of the CDP the construction works will be undertaken in accordance with safeguards included in a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP). This will ensure that construction is undertaken in line with industry best practices. The CEMP will set out a range of measures to avoid and mitigate potential adverse environmental effects associated with the Proposed Development construction phase. It will include measures such as controls over the routing of construction vehicles, construction noise levels, drainage, and the handling and disposal of potentially contaminated soil and materials. The CEMP will also include measures/recommendations set out in other reports prepared for this planning application, such as the Architectural Heritage Assessment (AHA) prepared for the Proposed Development, as well as details of any environmental monitoring requirements, communication protocols, and particular measures as required by conditions associated with planning approval (if granted). Measures included in the CEMP will be in accordance with all relevant standards and specifications, as well as best practice pollution prevention guidance and monitoring techniques.

Waste and materials management during the construction phase will be managed in accordance with a Resource and Waste Management Plan (RWMP). The RWMP will include consideration of opportunities to design out

waste and improve materials efficiency, with efforts made to maximise on-site reuse and off-site recycling and recovery of any waste construction material generated. The Contractor will be responsible for preparing, implementing, and reviewing the RWMP through the construction phase, including the management of all suppliers and sub-contractors. The RWMP shall form a sub-plan of the Contractor's CEMP.

8.12 Principle of Development

The Proposed Development is well located to benefit from and provide strategic connections to a range of key local facilities, including the Port by extension, within Wicklow, as showcased in Figure 4-2 above, facilitating an alternative means of access and movement for pedestrians and cyclists, facilitating active travel as an option and creating a safer means of access for non-vehicle users, providing key permeability across the current physical barrier of the road and railway line. In addition, it has the potential to help alleviate congestion and improve journey times for pedestrians / cyclists. The pupil numbers at East Glendalough School will rise from 360 to 510, whilst an hourly DART service has been proposed at Wicklow Train Station, likely contributing to higher levels of congestion in the area, representing a greater need for alleviation.

The Proposed Development will not physically impact the original main railway station building, the waiting room on platform No. 1 or signal cabin. The existing footbridge linking Platforms No. 1 and No. 2 will be retained alongside the signal cabin and waiting room under the proposal.

The notion of 'Sustainable Development' is underpinned by three pillars; Environment, Economic and Social. From an Environment perspective, the Proposed Development is designed in a way which ensures protection of natural resources and ecosystems and represents an effective use of underutilised land. With regards Economic, the Proposed Development provides innovative infrastructure that can provide potential for the success of the Town and its Port, whilst from a Social perspective the Proposed Development will provide for strong linkages and permeability into and from the residential and commercial locations, including the adjacent school.

The aim of the scheme is to provide a high-quality pedestrian and cycle link between the Wicklow Port Access Road (PAR), Wicklow Train Station and Station Road. By improving the pedestrian and cyclist infrastructure over the railway and creating a link to Wicklow PAR, the Proposed Development hopes to encourage modal shift to walking and cycling for those accessing Station Road and partially alleviate peak-time congestion in the area by offering a new access point to the amenities along Station Road.

Permeability and pedestrian activity are both acknowledged as two of the key components of quality placemaking, as per Chapter 5.3 of the CDP, with it noted that "*The permeability and safety of an area can be the determining factor in whether people walk or drive*", again showcasing that modal shift is both a realistic and achievable objective.

Having regard to the relevant zoning of the subject site, and policies and objectives as set out in both the extant CDP and Wicklow-Rathnew Development Plan, it is considered that the Proposed Development would be in accordance with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area, in alignment with the conclusions of the supporting documentation accompanying this Part 8 application.

In addition, the principle and design of the Proposed Development has followed a sensitive and rational approach to ensure minimal impacts to any sensitive surrounding areas by designing in line with all the relevant standards and guidance documents. It is therefore considered that the Proposed Development would be fully compliant with the proper planning and sustainable development requirements for the area, whilst it is ultimately reminded that Chapter 12 of the CDP directly confirms that "*The Council will continue to provide for all components of the transportation system which are within its own remit*".

It is further noted that the Client have also, in advance, received signed supporting letters from the relevant landowners, the Department of Education and Iarnród Éireann, showcasing wide support for the Proposed Development from the key stakeholders in the area.

The works and changes proposed are considered insignificant in relation to their size and design within the context of the surrounding environs, as per accompanying reports, and will enhance convenience and accessibility for local residents, commuters and visitors.

Of importance, it is reminded that the Proposed Development would achieve the following;

- The proposed connection to Wicklow PAR, Port and Wicklow town centre along with its proximity to Wicklow Train Station is considered to be an economically positive factor in regard to securing and attracting future enterprise and employment opportunities.
- The provision of the pedestrian and cycle infrastructure proposed would greatly assist with enhancing existing accessibility to a key public transport node; Wicklow Train Station, that will encourage and promote a sustainable transport modal shift and assist in reducing local carbon emissions.
- The implementation of the Proposed Development would effectively assist with targets set out within the RSES and would support multiple aims and objectives within the RSES. Specifically, any investment in rail infrastructure that enhances improvement accessibility and connectivity is encouraged.

9. Supporting Documentation

Alongside this Planning Report, additional technical, ecological and environmental reports were undertaken and submitted with the Application Package. Summaries and conclusions as appropriate are presented in the following Sections.

9.1 Appropriate Assessment (AA) Screening

An AA Screening was undertaken by AECOM in accordance with Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive, CPO 17.7 of the CDP and Policy MB8 of the Development Plan.

The AA Screening concluded:

“In view of best scientific knowledge and on the basis of objective information in light of the Conservation Objectives of the relevant European Sites, it can be stated beyond reasonable scientific doubt, that the Proposed Development will not have a significant effect on any European site, either individually or in-combination with other plans and projects.

There is consequently no requirement to proceed to the next stage of Appropriate Assessment’.

9.2 EIA Screening

An EIA Screening was conducted for the Proposed Development, with a copy accompanying this application, in line with the requirements of Policy CPO 17.4 of the CDP. Under the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended), EIA development fall into two Schedules. EIA is mandatory for developments listed within Schedule 5, Part 1, while Schedule 5, Part 2 developments require a full EIA if they are a development of a type set out in Part 2 of Schedule 5 which equal or exceed, a limit specified within Schedule 5 Part 2 in respect of the relevant class of development. Additionally, the Roads Act 1993 (as amended) sets out EIA requirements for roads projects and has been amended to take account of the requirements of the EIA Directive in line with the European Union (Roads Act 1993) (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Amendment) Regulations 2019.

The EIA Screening determined that the Proposed Development does not meet the criteria or minimum thresholds outlined in Section 50(1)(a) of the Roads Act 1993 (as amended) or Schedule 5, Part 1 and Part 2 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 – 2024 which trigger the requirement to undertake an EIAR, however the EIA Screening Report was still prepared to establish whether there are likely significant environmental effects from the Proposed Development on the receiving environment with regard to Schedule 7A and Schedule 7 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 – 2024.

The EIA Screening concluded:

“In summary, it is considered that the scale and characteristics of the Proposed Development indicate it would not constitute EIA development. Given the scale and design of the Proposed Development in the context of the surrounding land uses, the limited likely use of natural resources, and the likely low volume of waste generated, as well as the preparation and adoption of a CEMP, CTMP, and RWMP to mitigate the effects of construction works, the Proposed Development is unlikely to give rise to significant environmental effects.

No likely significant effects have been identified during the screening process and, as such, a full EIA culminating in the preparation of an EIAR is not required’.

9.3 Additional Documentation

In addition to the required screenings / assessments identified above, the application package is further accompanied by a robust package of supporting documents, consisting of:

- Archaeological Heritage Assessment Report

9.4 Drawing Package

The Planning Application Package is accompanied by a detailed drawing package, as detailed below in Table 9-1.

Table 9-1: Schedule of Supporting Drawings Submitted with Application

Reference	Drawing Name
WPAR-ACM-GEN-SW-DR-ZZ-0001	Wicklow PAR Link Site Boundary
WPAR-ACM-GEN-SW-DR-ZZ-0002	Wicklow PAR Link Topographical Survey
WPAR-ACM-VUT-SW-DR-CU-0001	Wicklow PAR Link Existing Services
WPAR-ACM-HGT-SW-DR-GI-0001	Wicklow PAR Link Ground Investigation
WPAR-ACM-HGN-SW-DR-CH-1000	Wicklow PAR Link General Arrangement
WPAR-ACM-HGN-SW-DR-CH-1001	Wicklow PAR Link Road Alignment
WPAR-ACM-HGN-SW-DR-CH-1002	Wicklow PAR Link Roads Profiles Sheet 1 of 2
WPAR-ACM-HGN-SW-DR-CH-1003	Wicklow PAR Link Roads Profiles Sheet 2 of 2
WPAR-ACM-HGN-SW-DR-CH-1004	Wicklow PAR Link Roads Section Locations
WPAR-ACM-HGN-SW-DR-CH-1005	Wicklow PAR Link Roads Sections
WPAR-ACM-HGN-SW-DR-CH-1006	Wicklow PAR Link Cut & Fill Analysis
WPAR-ACM-HGN-SW-DR-CH-1007	Wicklow PAR Link Swept Path Analysis
WPAR-ACM-GEN-SW-DR-CH-1008	Wicklow PAR Link Accommodation Works
WPAR-ACM-HGN-SW-DR-CH-2001	Wicklow PAR Link Drainage
WPAR-ACM-HLG-SW-DR-EO-1001	Wicklow PAR Link Public Lighting
WPAR-ACM-SBR-SW-DR-CB-3001	Wicklow PAR Link Structures Plan
WPAR-ACM-SBR-SW-DR-CB-3002	Wicklow PAR Link Structures General Arrangement

10. Conclusion

This Report has set out the contents of the planning application, site description and location of the Proposed Development, along with an evaluation of the planning history, relevant planning policy and thorough planning assessment against a range of considerations. It has been demonstrated throughout this Report, and accompanying documentation, that the Proposed Development positively supports the objectives and policies of the pertinent policy documentation, as well as complying with surrounding land uses and delivering on the key objectives of the CDP and localised Development Plan.

Investment in transport is never for its own sake. The goal of the Proposed Development is not simply the construction of a bridge, but to facilitate all the benefits which this proposed piece of infrastructure will bring by allowing for the movement of people and goods, in addition to the objectives noted in Section 3 above, that will benefit pupils, residents and businesses alike. The right transport investment helps to deliver high-quality travel and supports positive outcomes for society, the environment and the economy, with the Proposed Development well placed to deliver a range of direct and indirect benefits. Expanding walking and cycling options to promote greater use of active travel can support climate targets to reduce emissions as well as improving fitness levels and public health and reducing congestion and private car use.

The Proposed Development will provide a high-quality pedestrian and cycle link between the Wicklow PAR, Wicklow Train Station and Station Road. The implementation of this link will significantly improve existing cycling and walking journey times and accommodate modal shift in journeys / transport, as well as reducing congestion.

The subject site is an appropriate location for such development in terms of planning policy and it shall cause no adverse harm (as per assessments submitted), representing proper planning and sustainable development, whilst accommodating much needed active travel infrastructure in a key location, through development that is actively supported by the key stakeholders. It is, therefore, respectfully requested that the Council grant approval for this key Proposed Development.

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