



Draft Wicklow Rathnew Draft LAP Amendment Stage Submission - Report

Who are you:	Private Individual
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Topic

LAP - Proposed Material Amendments No 26 Submission

Submission

PDF file attached. Note that the text is similar to that submitted by other individuals, but it does encapsulate our views and some other considerations

File

Objection to Propoposed amendment 1 and 26 to the Wicklow and Rathnew LAP.pdf, 0.08MB

To Whom It May Concern,

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

We wish to submit our objection to the **Proposed Material Amendments 1 and 26** in relation to SLO-9 and the Glebe / Fernhill lands. Our concerns are outlined below:

1. Rezoning of Community/Education Lands to Residential Use

We oppose the rezoning of land previously zoned entirely as **Community/Education (CE)**. Changing this to residential use would **reduce the amount of land available for public benefit**, at a time when Wicklow is experiencing rapid population growth.

There is already plenty of land zoned for residential use and we are concerned that rezoning would set a damaging precedent for how public land is managed in the county.

2. Protection of Natural Areas (OS2) and Environmental Concerns

We welcome the commitment to protect lands zoned as **OS2** and covered by a **Tree Preservation Order (TPO)**. However, to maintain the ecological integrity of the area, we believe the following safeguards are essential:

- Any recreational development should be **strictly low-impact** and subject to a full **ecological assessment**
- The area should continue to function as a **wildlife corridor and natural buffer** between development and residential zones
- Any increased human activity in this area should be managed carefully to avoid long-term damage to biodiversity

We are particularly concerned about environmental impacts on the area as it is now home to the **Great Spotted Woodpecker** a rare bird species that has only recently re-established itself in Ireland after a long absence. Such species **are protected under the Wildlife Acts, 1976 and 2000**, which aim to ensure the protection of all wild birds, including their nests, eggs, and young. The woodpeckers and other valuable species rely on mature trees and woodland, so it is important that these habitats are protected to safeguard the species' future.

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

The suggestion that pedestrian or cycling connectivity could be routed **through Glebemount Estate** raises several serious issues affecting safety, privacy, and residential amenity.

A. Glebemount Is Not Designed for Through-Traffic

Glebemount is a quiet, long-established residential area made up of cul-de-sacs and narrow roads designed for local access only. Introducing a public route would:

- Increase non-residential footfall and cycling traffic past private homes
- Disrupt the peaceful, family-oriented character of the estate
- Result in loss of privacy and increased noise and disturbance

B. Safety Risks for Children, Elderly Residents, and Vulnerable Road Users

A through-route would significantly increase unpredictable movement and pose safety risks:

- At blind corners and driveways not suited to frequent traffic
- On streets lacking dedicated pedestrian or cycling infrastructure

C. Parking and Traffic Congestion

Glebemount already experiences **serious parking pressure**, with many homes relying on on-street parking. A new public route would:

- Strain limited parking space
- Possibly create conflict between residents and pass-through users

4. Inappropriate Scale and Density of Proposed Development Adjacent to Existing Homes

We understand that the landowner is proposing a high-density residential scheme comprising apartments, duplexes, and houses. We object to this proposal, particularly as it would directly border long-established homes in Glebemount.

This form of development is **entirely out of character** with the surrounding low-density neighbourhood, which is primarily made up of two-storey and bungalow family homes with private gardens.

The proposed scale and intensity would:

- **Overlook and overshadow existing gardens**, negatively impacting privacy and amenity
- Visually dominate the existing built environment
- Create an abrupt and inappropriate **transition in building scale and form**
- Place additional strain on local infrastructure, particularly traffic and parking

Such a development fails to respect the established **character, pattern, and scale** of nearby housing — key considerations under both local and national planning policy. It would represent **overdevelopment** and would not constitute proper planning or sustainable development of the area.

Conclusion and Requests

We urge Wicklow County Council to consider the long-term impact of these amendments — particularly the environmental impacts, the impact on existing communities, the loss of public-zoned land, and the incompatible scale of the proposed development.

The current proposal for high-density housing is wholly out of keeping with the area. It would result in overlooking, overshadowing, loss of privacy, and a significant erosion of amenity for

nearby residents. Such overdevelopment on a constrained site next to an established neighbourhood would represent a serious departure from good planning practice.

We therefore respectfully request that:

- **Glebemount Estate be explicitly excluded** from any proposed pedestrian or cycling connectivity routes
- The **Community/Education** zoning be retained
- The proposed high-density scheme be **rejected**, and future development be limited in **scale, height, and density** to ensure compatibility with the surrounding environment
- Any future proposals be subject to **comprehensive public consultation**, robust **safety and environmental assessments**, and a **community-led design approach**

Thank you for considering this submission.

Yours sincerely,

Charlie Cowan and Terri Cowan