

GAP (Greystones Area Planning) Community

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30.08.21

Re: GAP Community Submission on Chapter 9 Economic Development into Draft County Wicklow Development Plan 2021 – 2027.

We are a group of residents from Greystones and Delgany who have come together following the recent, significant developments that have taken place over the past number of years. We believe that these developments are unsustainable due to lack of investment in all other aspects associated with granting planning permission such as public services (schooling, medical, dental) transport infrastructure (traffic congestion), recreational facilities (lack of), residential issues resulting in an adverse impact into the biodiversity of the area.

Several these developments (Glenheron) have been approved under the Strategic Housing Development (SHD) process. We are also aware of the Carmelite development in Delgany which is under a Judicial Review and an upcoming SHD at Coolagad. We believe strongly that the SHD process is completely undemocratic as they bypass residents' rights to object to planning proposals in the normal manner – making representations to elected councillors and the county council. It has been reported by architect and surveyor bodies that SHD's have led to high density badly designed residential developments that tend to override democratically devised Local Area Plans (LAP) especially on density levels.

Greystones Area Planning Community welcomes this opportunity to input into the Wicklow County Development Plan 2021 – 2027 to try and ensure that planning of developments going forward is sustainable.

Our input is as follows;

CHAPTER 9 Economic Development

As mentioned above already, we have already had significant development in Greystones and Delgany, we NOW have large and ever-increasing infrastructural deficits to key services such as education, health, public transport and road infrastructure.

Given permission for housing and residential units alone does not constitute proper planning, a more holistic approach is urgently needed. Planning needs to be joined-up and integrated and the draft County Development Plan would benefit hugely from the evidence of joint plans with the Departments of Education, Health, Transport, Environment, Climate and Communications and Housing, Local Government and Heritage.

It is also very clear that having up to date accurate information and data on population trends and ACTING on it would help with better planning.

With schooling in 2021, there were significant issues with places in both primary and secondary schools throughout the area. At 1 stage, there was close to 200 primary school children without secondary school places. This was stressful for the parents involved, gained considerable coverage in local and national media and was discussed several times in the Dail with significant representation from elected officials.

This information should have been available through the last census carried out. If the case is put forward that the census could not help with identifying this pressure point, it highlights even further how “broke” the planning system is that planning permission for developments can be granted without accompanying investment in all other societal infrastructure.

Employment

It is clear from the low jobs ratio to the area, that the majority of residents in Greystones/Delgany commute to Dublin for their work (in normal, non COVID times). There is a need for high value-added jobs (i.e. highly paid employment) in the Delgany/Greystones area. Strong contacts should be fostered with Enterprise Ireland and the IDA in order to attract more sustainable highly paid employment into the area.

Wicklow, as a county, needs a detailed strategy and plan to attract high value-added employment opportunities (e.g. ICT/financial services office/data hubs in Bray and Greystones). A number of financial companies are also now looking to find suitable locations for satellite offices outside Dublin and Wicklow should be pro-active in seeking to attract these companies.

The feedback and input in this submission is designed to improve / strengthen the Draft Wicklow County Development Plan 2021 – 2027 even further.

Yours Sincerely,
Greystones Area Planning Committee.